Saturday 6 February 2016

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7days

A week in photography



When Olympus introduced its first Pen (the E-P1) in 2009, we all admired the retro design, but when I was asked whether I'd buy one the answer, sadly, was no. Furthermore, I questioned how many people would be prepared to part with the best part of a grand for a camera with no viewfinder. The answer, as time later showed, was not very many. A succession of Pens struggled to resonate with the public and it wasn't until Olympus launched its OM2-inspired OM-D system, complete with electronic viewfinder, that the company's CSCs won the public acclaim and commercial success it sought. Now Olympus has returned to the Pen and added an EVF to that too, to create the spectacular looking Pen-F. It took a while but it looks like the message has finally got through: serious photographers want and expect their cameras to come with a viewfinder. Hallelujah! **Nigel Atherton, Editor**

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ONLINE PICTURE OF THE WEEK



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Magnolia Campbellii 'Alba' by Brian Haslam

Canon EOS 5D, 28-105mm, 1/125sec at f/9, ISO 160

Brian Haslam uploaded this beautiful example of flower photography to our Facebook page.

'I visited Lanhydrock, a National Trust property in Cornwall, one spring looking for photos,' says Brian. 'Making my way through the estate, a magnolia tree stood out from the top of a hill. After locating it, I held down the front petal of one flower with one hand to show the centre parts. It did have a black background, but I painted it with a tone taken from one of the petals.'

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In this issue

8 Olympus Pen-F
We take a first look at Olympus's new high-end CSC

12 Cold comfort
Great winter images from AP readers

22 Lights, camera, action...
Keith Bernstein talks about shooting stills for movies and TV series

29 EISA Maestro
Your chance to win €1,500 in the EISA 2016 Maestro competition

30 Put a spring in your step
Robert Canis on how to photograph snowdrops

34 Go to town
How to make the most of the urban environment, with Craig Roberts

42 Location guide
Dancing Ledge in Dorset is well worth the effort, says Mark Bauer

48 Appraisal
Damien Demolder on how to improve your images

53 Tamron 14-150mm f/3.5-5.8 Di III
We test the only third-party zoom for Micro Four Thirds

56 Eyefi Mobi Pro Wi-Fi SDHC card
Eyefi's most fully featured Wi-Fi SD card on test

58 Tripod tricks
Making videos need not be so expensive...

Regulars

3 7 days
18 Inbox
44 Reader portfolio
50 Accessories
61 Technical Support
82 Final analysis

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Transparencies/prints Well-packaged prints or slides (without glass mounts) should be sent by Special Delivery, with a return SAE, to the address on page 19.

NEWS ROUND-UP

The week in brief, edited by Chris Cheesman

New Metz flash



The 44 AF-2 mecablitz flashgun from Metz features a new LED video light, aimed at videographers using DSLRs or mirrorless cameras. The 44 AF-2 features a control panel on the back and a motorised zoom for illumination coverage of 24-105mm. The £179.99 device also has a flip-out reflector card. Visit www.metzflash.co.uk.

FinePix XP90 debuts



Billed as a rugged camera for outdoor pursuits, the Fujifilm FinePix XP90 sports a 28-140mm equivalent lens and is claimed to withstand temperatures down to -10°C. Built to be dustproof, and waterproof to a depth of 15m, the 16.4-million-pixel XP90 delivers a 10fps burst rate at full resolution, according to Fuji. It is due in February, priced £179.

Manfrotto lights



Manfrotto has launched three new portable LED lights. The on-camera Manfrotto Croma2, Micropro2 and Spectra2, which cost from £154.95, allow the user to control light intensity and are claimed to deliver perfect colour rendition and improved optical efficiency over current models. The Spectra2 (above) is the most compact in the professional range and is designed to deliver 650lux. For details, visit www.manfrotto.co.uk.

Nikon compact duo

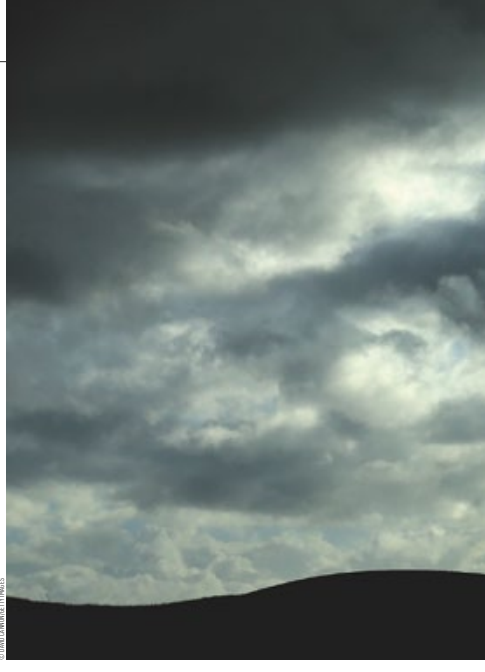


Nikon has launched two compact cameras. The 20.1-million-pixel Nikon Coolpix A100 (left) and 16.1-million-pixel Coolpix A10. Highlights of the £59.99 Coolpix A10 include its ability to be charged using AA batteries. The A100 is only on sale at Argos and carries a 5x optical zoom. It costs £69.99 online at the time of writing.

'Anti-stain' filters



Kenko has launched three RealPRO filters available exclusively through WEX Photographic. The UV, circular polarisers and ND1000 neutral density have a new Anti-Stain Coating that allows moisture and water droplets to 'bead up and slip away'. Prices start from £33. For details, visit www.intro2020.co.uk.



© DAVID LAWRENCE/TIPPINGLES

BIG picture

This picture of stormy scenes at Rye Golf Club is reminiscent of another famous image

Perhaps one of the most magical things about the medium of photography is the fact that it's able to inspire interest in areas you would never normally give a second thought to. One of the best examples is the genre of sports

WEEKEND PROJECT

Chinese New Year

The Chinese New Year falls on 8 February this year (it follows the lunisolar Chinese calendar) and marks the start of the Year of the Monkey. Many celebrations will be taking place the following weekend, with London's annual festivities (the biggest in the world outside China) being held on 14 February. But it's not just London that will see celebrations for the Year of the Monkey, as Chinese communities in cities across the country, including Newcastle, Manchester and Birmingham, will also host events. With a little bit of research you may find an event near you. These celebrations, with their riotous colours and sounds, offer fabulous photo opportunities. Here are just a few ideas to get you started.

1 Expect ceremonial parades to take place, with the lion and dragon dance being a highlight. They move pretty fast, so be prepared to fire off a burst of shots – continuous AF will come in handy.

2 If you want to get a bit more creative, drop the shutter speed down to 1/15sec or 1sec to introduce movement blur into your shot. Sticking with a slow shutter speed, think about panning with your subject.

and action photography. Even if you have no interest whatsoever in sport, the keen photography enthusiast in you will still find it possible to marvel at the technical and aesthetic brilliance of a scene captured by one of the many photographers who attend sporting events.

This shot is by David Cannon of Getty Images, who photographed Ian Pattinson of Pembroke College, Cambridge, as he leaves the seventh green against a backdrop of stormy skies during the Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society President's Putter at Rye Golf Club in East Sussex. Another interesting thing to notice is how we can often see history in the most unexpected of places. As well as being a lovely shot, when looking at this image you can't help but be reminded of an extremely famous photograph: Joe Rosenthal's 'Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima'.

3 Despite firecrackers being set off in daylight, they can still make for a good shot. Focusing can be tricky, so it might be worth manually pre-focusing on a point or tracking the faces of the people setting them off.

4 Make sure you wander around the celebrations as there will be plenty of things to catch your eye – food stalls, street decorations and Chinese calligraphy all make interesting subjects.



The Chinese New Year provides countless opportunities for photography

© ALAMY/DOUG HOUSER

Words & numbers

> Photography is a reality so subtle that it becomes more real than reality
>
> Alfred Stieglitz
> American photographer
> 1864-1946

SOURCE: X-RITE

25

Sheets of paper wasted per month by photographers not colour managing their workflow



Accurate colour translation from one device to the next, means more consistent and predictable colour

© KEIU

Photographers in UK waste £10k a year, survey claims

UK PHOTOGRAPHERS waste almost £10,000 per year in lost time and printing costs by not colour calibrating their equipment, a new survey has shown.

Digital cameras, monitors, printers and scanners reproduce colours differently, meaning that the image colours on a computer monitor may fail to match those delivered by a printer, for example.

Colour-management software helps the photographer achieve more accurate and consistent results.

The poll, carried out by colour-management software maker X-Rite, found that the lack of screen-colour calibration costs UK photographers an average of £5,200 per year – equivalent to four-and-a-half hours a week in colour correction.

More than 80% of those surveyed were amateurs or 'prosumers'.

White balance editing was found to cost £3,700 per year, while wasted ink and paper from inaccurate prints accounted for £1,000.

While 80% of the UK photographers said they owned colour-management equipment, only 21% of those taking part in the poll said that they colour calibrated their mobile device.

The total time lost through a lack of white-balance control or screen calibration is the equivalent to one working day per week, according to X-Rite, which received responses from around 300 UK photographers who attended its trade shows and competitions across Europe in 2014 and 2015.

'On average, a lack of print colour management will mean 27 photographers throwing away one tree's worth of paper every year,' claims X-Rite.

The UK results were among nearly 500 responses that X-Rite received from photographers across Europe.



X-Rite's survey of 500 photographers reports the benefits of colour calibration

Geoffrey Clements, managing director of X-Rite Photo Europe, said: 'Talking to our customers, we have known that the benefits of superior image quality, consistency and peace of mind when editing are all powerful reasons why photographers and videographers use X-Rite's world-leading colour management solutions.'

He added: 'This survey has, for the first time, given us clear data on exactly how much time is being lost by photographers who aren't using colour management. The results are evidence that photographers at all levels should realise the benefits of time and money savings when utilising colour management in their workflow.'

X-Rite produces colour-management software to create a profile for all photographers' devices. 'A profile provides a description of each device's colour gamut – the range of reproducible colour,' explains the firm on its website www.xrite.com.

'You use these profiles in your workflow, and the result is an accurate translation from one device to the next, giving you consistent, predictable colour.'



Sony sounds RX1R II warning

SONY has stated that some of its RX1R II cameras may have a fault.

On 19 January, Sony US issued a statement which read: 'In rare bright conditions, some of our DSC-RX1RM2 cameras may produce image files with unwanted light.'

The potential glitch only affects certain serial numbers and Sony has pledged to provide a free inspection and service. It urges customers to check if their camera's serial number falls between 6310198 and 6311127.

It is not clear whether cameras shipped to the UK have been affected and Sony UK was not able to comment on the number of affected units.

A spokesperson added: 'When shooting with extremely bright light, certain shooting scenes may cause unwanted light to appear in the bottom right corner of an image.'

Visit http://esupport.sony.com/US/p/support-contacts.pl?mdl=DSCRX1RM2.



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The new X-U can be used to depths of 15m

Leica's first outdoor camera makes a splash

IN A SURPRISE move, Leica Camera AG has revealed a 'fully waterproofed' member of its X family.

The Leica X-U is an outdoor model Leica says is 'born for adventure'.

The X-U is the first of Leica's cameras specifically designed for outdoor and underwater photography.

It features a 23mm Summilux f/1.7 Asph lens (which equates to 35mm) and a 16.2-million-pixel, APS-C-size imaging sensor.

Leica claims the X-U can be used down to a depth of 15m and that it is shock-resistant, dust-sealed and shatter-proof.

Touted as the ideal camera for an outdoor expedition or adventure, the X-U also boasts full HD video.

Being of German origin, it is perhaps unsurprising that Leica designed the X-U in collaboration with car manufacturer Audi. The camera carries an aluminium top-plate, a 'non-slip' body and a toughened monitor cover.

The Leica X-U is out now, priced £2,400.

An optional strap is available and costs £50, while a neoprene strap carries a £32 price tag.

Red Arrows warns photographers

THE RED Arrows has warned photographers they are taking unnecessary risks after Air Traffic Control was forced to abort pilot training when people were spotted directly under the flight path recently.

The scare occurred on 15 January at the Red Arrows base at RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire, according to a message posted by the supervisor of the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team on Twitter.

The message, posted by @rafred10, read: 'It has come to the point where people are taking unnecessary risks to get those photographs'.

The tweet also warned: 'Air Traffic Control had to stop our pilots performing circuits as there were people on the centreline of each runway, directly under the flight paths of the aircraft taking off and landing.

'By doing so people are endangering themselves and others, and ATC had no choice but to stop us, thereby curtailing crucial training for our pilots.

'Could we please request that people think sensibly about where to stand in order not to jeopardise their safety and our operations.'

Responding to the tweet, one Twitter user, John Atkinson, wrote: 'What a shame some people have to take silly risks. Only takes one to spoil it for so many.'


© MICHAEL LYNHAM

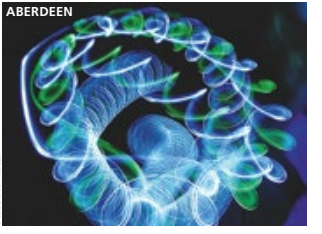
Both photographers and pilots were at risk

For the latest news visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Get up & go

The most interesting things to see, to do and to shoot this week. By Tom Smallwood

ABERDEEN


© DOUGLAS PEARY ANDREW

Spectra: Aberdeen's Festival of Light

To celebrate the 2016 Scottish Year of Innovation, Architecture & Design though this year's 'Spark of Inspiration', Aberdeen City Council in conjunction with Curated Place will be delivering a four-day light festival.

11-14 February, spectraaberdeen.com/spectra431

COVENTRY


© DEAN DEBOSKI WPOTY 2015

WPOTY 2015

With 100 stunning wildlife images from the 51st competition arriving at the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum in Coventry, this is a chance to see some of the most impressive shots of fascinating animal behaviour and breathtaking wild landscapes. Don't miss it.

5 February-10 April, www.theherbert.org

LONDON


© ANGUS PACHECO BIXSON, NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Otherworlds: Visions of our Solar System

Explore the wonders of space at the Natural History Museum, featuring 70 composite images created by photographer, curator and writer Michael Benson. Benson used raw data from NASA and ESA space missions. It is accompanied by music from Brian Eno.

Until 15 May, www.nhm.ac.uk

LONDON


© STEVE GOSLING

Travelling Light

Colour and black & white landscapes are on show by the prominent Olympus OM-D user, Steve Gosling. Locations range from the Lake District to Colorado and the show takes place at the Art Bermondsey Project Space Gallery.

8-13 February, www.stevegoslingphotography.co.uk

LONDON


© SAUL LEITER/COURTESY HOWARD GREENBERG GALLERY, NEW YORK

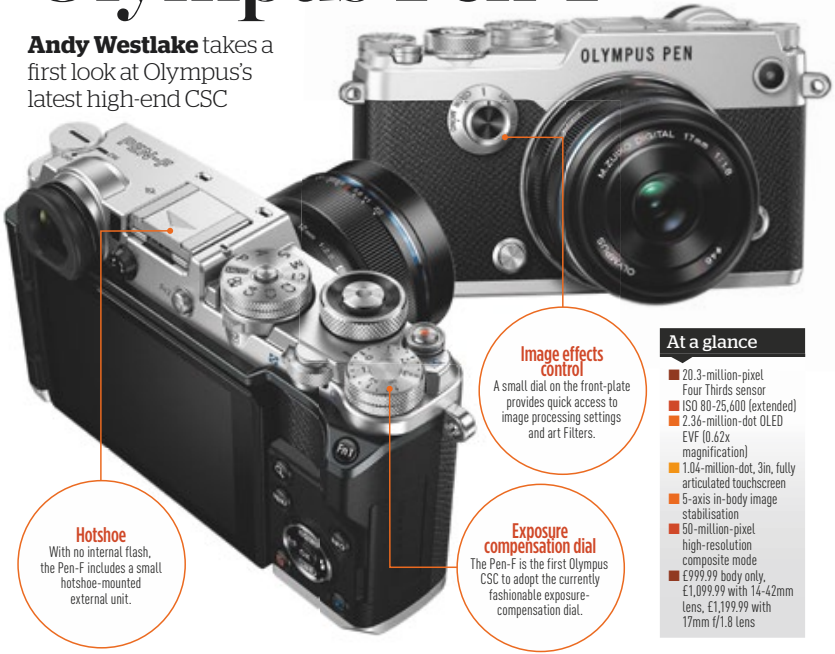
Saul Leiter

Saul Leiter (1923-2013) was a pioneer of colour photography at a time it was scoffed at by his peers, and was shooting with colour film as early as 1946. This exhibition reveals his impressionistic and influential street scenes in colour and b&w.

Until 3 April, thephotographersgallery.org.uk

Olympus Pen-F

Andy Westlake takes a first look at Olympus's latest high-end CSC



At a glance

- 20.3-million-pixel Four Thirds sensor
- ISO 80-25,600 (extended)
- 2.36-million-dot OLED EVF (0.62x magnification)
- 1.04-million-dot, 3in, fully articulated touchscreen
- 5-axis in-body image stabilisation
- 50-million-pixel high-resolution composite mode
- £999.99 body only, £1,099.99 with 14-42mm lens, £1,199.99 with 17mm f/1.8 lens

WHEN Olympus launched its first Micro Four Thirds camera, the Pen E-P1, back in 2009, it made great play of its heritage harking back to the legendary Pen-F half-frame 35mm SLR. But with its latest mirrorless model it's gone a step further, not only appropriating more of its predecessor's 1950s design cues, but also its name. Meet the oh-so-pretty Pen-F, Olympus's first flat-bodied compact system camera to include a built-in viewfinder.

However, that's not the Pen-F's only point of interest. It's also the first Olympus Micro Four Thirds camera to feature a 20-million-pixel sensor, which does without an optical low-pass filter to maximise resolution. It's likely to be the same sensor as Panasonic uses in the Lumix DMC-GX8 and, if so, we can expect to see useful improvements in image quality compared to Olympus's previous models.

Despite its name, the Pen-F bears little resemblance to its rather minimalist forebear. Instead, it looks like a digital reincarnation of the iconic Leica III 35mm rangefinder, with top and front-plate dials in many of the same places. The result is a camera that looks gorgeous.

Features

Lurking behind the Pen-F's nostalgic exterior is a very up-to-date camera. The 20-million-pixel sensor and TruePic VII processor combine to offer a standard sensitivity range of ISO 200-25,600, with a pulled ISO 80-equivalent LOW setting for bright light shooting. The mechanical shutter offers speeds from 1/8000sec-60secs, and a silent electronic shutter option giving an even faster 1/16000sec maximum.

Continuous shooting is available at up to 10fps, with a 16-frame raw buffer, and autofocus uses an 81-point contrast-detection system. The Pen-F also includes essentially the same 5-axis in-body IS system as the OM-D E-M5 II that's said to offer fully 5 stops of stabilisation, according to Camera & Imaging Products Association (CIPA) standard testing. Olympus's high-resolution composite mode is on board too, which combines eight exposures to give a 50-million-pixel image.

There's no built-in flash, but the Pen-F will ship with the small FL-LM3 flash unit. This has a bounce-and-swivel head and can act as a wireless controller for off-camera units. A fairly conventional-looking video spec is included, with full HD recording at up to 60fps and built-in stereo microphones.

Build and handling

With a predominantly aluminium body shell, the Pen-F's build quality reflects its premium price. All the dials are milled



The Pen-F is the first of Olympus's PEN series to include an electronic viewfinder

rather than cast, giving a precise, tactile feel. The camera's retro credentials are reinforced by the power switch, which resembles a film-rewind knob, and the shutter button, which is threaded for a good old-fashioned cable release. Unlike Olympus's high-end OM-Ds, though, the Pen-F isn't described as weathersealed.

In terms of controls and handling, the Pen-F is something of a departure from recent Olympus designs. It's the first of the company's Micro Four Thirds models to sport a dedicated exposure compensation dial, covering ±3EV in ⅓EV steps. Twin electronic dials, front and rear, control other exposure settings. The exposure-mode dial has a toggle-lock button, and gains four numbered 'C' positions for saving and recalling user-defined set-ups.

A new dial on the front-plate, positioned in the same place as the film Pen-F's shutter-speed dial, gives access to the camera's image processing settings. Alongside Olympus's familiar art filters and colour-creator mode are two new options. Monochrome-profile control allows you to mimic the effects of using coloured lens filters with black & white film, manipulate contrast and add vignetting. Meanwhile, the colour-profile control mode allows you to selectively emphasise different hues in the image.

Viewfinder and screen

Impressively, Olympus has managed to fit an electronic viewfinder into a body that, at 124.8x72.1x37.3mm, is barely larger than the original Pen E-P1. The EVF uses a 2.36-million-dot OLED panel with 0.62x magnification. There's an eye sensor for auto switchover with the LCD, and built-in dioptre correction.

The rear screen is a 3in fully articulated touchscreen. The focus point can be repositioned by touch, both when viewing with the LCD and with the eye-level viewfinder.

First impressions

With cameras like this that pay so much attention to style, it can be all too easy to get distracted from the underlying substance. But this would be a mistake, as the Pen-F looks like a very interesting design. With its new sensor, it promises to deliver the best image quality we've yet seen from any Olympus camera, and I suspect it might have the best handling while shooting, too.

Olympus sees the Pen-F as a discreet camera ideal for street shooting, and better suited for use with small, fast primes than with large f/2.8 zooms. We'll test this out, and much more, when we get a proper test sample – look out for our full review in the next couple of months.

Accessories



AS YOU would expect with such a design-conscious camera, it will be complemented by a range of matched (and expensive) accessories. At launch there'll be the CSS-S120L leather neckstrap for £79.99, the CBG-11PR leather messenger bag for £379.99 and the CS-47B leather body jacket for £49.99. For the more practically inclined, the £109.99 ECG-4 handgrip includes an Arca-Swiss pattern tripod quick-release base.

20MP sensor was no huge surprise

OLYMPUS has doggedly stuck to a 16-million-pixel sensor for the past three years but hinted it may go higher after unveiling the OM-D E-M10 Mark II six months ago, *writes Chris Cheesman*.

So it was not a shock to hear Olympus announce a 20.3MP sensor for the Pen-F, especially given the impressive 20.3MP in the Panasonic Lumix DMC-GX8 launched last year.

'They were waiting for the sensor to come along that was at least as good [in terms of] dynamic range and light capabilities as the one we already had,' said Mark Thackara, product manager for Pen & Stylus at Olympus Europe.

'Olympus's pitch has always been they don't want to just go for megapixels, they want to go for overall image quality.'

Thackara, who declined to name the sensor's maker (which is believed to be Sony), said: 'If the extra resolution is available and you are not compromising any of the other performance aspects, then it is a logical thing to do'.

Another key part of Olympus's 'pitch' for the Pen-F is the inclusion of a rangefinder-style EVF, which, Thackara suggested, people have been demanding for some time.

Such a viewfinder is made more pertinent by the expansion of creative options to include colour filters. Thackara said: 'One of the things that we perhaps haven't been strong enough in talking about is just how useful it is to be able to see exactly what's happening in the viewfinder.

'And when you have got all of these colour options, they are not always as visible on the LCD because of the daylight. But you put your eye to the viewfinder and you can see absolutely what's going on.'

However, Olympus has yet to decide if the digital Pen-F is a one-off or the first in a range. 'In theory it should be an ongoing product, but the market is very volatile at the moment, so everybody [in the industry] is trying to see what works and what doesn't,' added Thackara.



© OLYMPUS AMERICA

The Pen-FT, a variant of the Pen-F, produced from 1966

1960s classic

Manufactured between 1963 and 1966, the original Pen-F was the first half-frame 35mm SLR featuring a Porro prism to allow 'streamlined design without roof prism', explains the classic camera bible *McKeown's*. The half-frame format meant the user got twice as many shots from a roll of film. Later variations included the Pen-FT, made from 1966-72, boasting improvements such as a single-stroke lever advance and a self-timer.



Viewpoint
Lars Rehm

Photographers using mobiles need to consider a lot more than just the camera's capabilities when choosing a smartphone

Smartphone cameras have improved vastly over the past few years and image-quality differences between high-end models are becoming more and more marginal. Innovative imaging features as well as camera usability and ergonomics are still important differentiators, but photographers using mobiles should consider a few non-imaging criteria when choosing a new device. Characteristics such as battery life, GPS precision and environmental protection can all be essential for capturing the decisive moment.

Battery life is still one of the most glaring weaknesses of smartphones and few devices make it through an entire day of intense use without charging, especially if you are shooting, reviewing and editing a lot of images. Precision of the GPS module is key if you want to embed location information into images, tag your favourite photo spot or navigate to the nearest photographic supply store for an emergency purchase. Shatterproof displays and waterproof bodies can prove invaluable when shooting outdoors on adventure trips or in adverse weather conditions. They also help avoid expensive repair bills, as well as scraped or dented edges on your device when dropped.

In the past you had to buy bulky cases and/or external batteries to expand battery life and increase the ruggedness of a device, but some of the latest generation smartphones come with high-capacity batteries and ruggedness, without compromising on design, dimensions or weight.

'Few devices make it through an entire day of intense use without charging'

Sony was the first manufacturer to combine waterproof bodies with sleek design in its Xperia Z line and since then several smartphone makers, including Samsung with the Galaxy S5, have introduced devices that are at least splashproof, allowing you to keep shooting in the rain. Battery life has been generally improving, but especially in larger devices, such as the Samsung Galaxy Note 5 or Huawei Ascend Mate 7, that let you still place a call or surf the web after a busy day of mobile photography.

However, there is currently only one smartphone that combines all the characteristics mentioned above: the Motorola Moto X Force. Its large 3,760mAh battery easily takes you through the day, the shell is water repellent and the display is shatterproof. The GPS module is extremely accurate and not deterred by urban canyons, large trees or underpasses.

Luckily, the 21MP camera with 1/2.4in sensor and f/2 aperture is very capable as well, but ultimately the Moto X Force is currently my favourite camera phone because it allows me to keep shooting when other devices would be plugged in to a power outlet or safely stored in a bag.



The robust Motorola Moto X Force has excellent battery life and a 21MP camera

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS COLUMN ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER MAGAZINE (EDITORIAL) OR TIME INC (UK)

Lars Rehm is a freelance photographer and writer, contributing to publications in the US, UK and Germany. In his former role as part of DPReview's testing team, he shot with countless digital cameras of all shapes and sizes, but nowadays he captures most of his images with a smartphone. Visit www.larsrehm.com or follow him on Twitter @larsrehm

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the address on page 19 and win a year's digital subscription to AP, worth £79.99

New Books

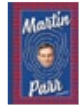
The latest and best books from the world of photography. By Oliver Atwell



© MARTIN PARR

Autoportrait

By Martin Parr, Xavier Barral, £16.99, hardback, 144 pages, ISBN 978-2-36511-081-5



FIRST published in 2000, *Autoportrait* found Parr travelling across the world having his portrait taken by various means, whether by a local studio photographer, a street photographer or in a photo booth. What's genuinely beautiful about this collection is that at no point do the images become repetitive or tedious. Despite featuring the same subject, each image is notable for its clear identity. Some images hark back to the days of elaborate Victorian sets, while others are digitally manipulated. We find a plethora of approaches to portraiture, some of which contain social and political references that can perhaps tell us about the location in which they were shot. The project also questions the nature of the portrait and this updated collection is genuinely fascinating. ★★★★★

Road Wallah

By Dougie Wallace, Dewi Lewis, £35, hardback, 96 pages, ISBN 978-1-90789-385-8



IN THE pantheon of 'love them or hate them' photographers, Dougie Wallace stands tall as one of the most divisive and challenging photographers out there. These images will likely do nothing to change the mind of his detractors, but for those who appreciate Wallace's, at times, garish and hyperreal depictions of street life, there is much to love. This time Wallace has turned his attention to the Premier Padmini taxis that crawl through the streets of Mumbai in India. Due to attempts to reduce the city's pollution the number of these taxis is now dwindling, but the ones that remain are, in Wallace's observation, elaborate Bollywood disco bars on wheels. Wallace takes great glee in capturing the incredible ferries and the passengers, as well as the drivers and the intense thronging streets that surround them. As with much of Wallace's work, the images bleed off the page and offer representations of real life that feels weirdly alien and psychedelic. ★★★★★

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Cold comfort

We reveal a selection of winter images from AP readers and their thoughts on capturing that stand-out moment

LAST year's Christmas cover competition saw us inundated with a stunning and varied selection of winter images that were all in contention to grace the front page as the cover image for our *Amateur Photographer* Christmas Special issue (19–26 December).

Having the tricky task of only being able to pick one winning image, we felt it was a shame to let so many great pictures not have a chance to shine as well, so we've gathered our favourites together here for you. Not only that, but we've also spoken with each photographer featured to get some details about their shots, and asked them to pass on their own winter shooting tips that they've found indispensable in these colder months.

Steven Sandner
The sky at night
www.facebook.com/sandner.art



NIGHT photography is probably one of the most challenging forms of photography and sometimes the most rewarding. It's also an art form, as long exposures and the digital darkroom will yield results we cannot naturally see: auroras are brighter and more colourful; patterns emerge and the sky becomes a majestic chandelier of lights.

The most important step to taking good night shots is finding the right location – one devoid of light pollution, with an interesting backdrop such as mountains, lakes or rivers. Many entry-level cameras with aperture ratings around f/3.5 will be good enough to capture the Milky Way and Magellanic Clouds. Multiple exposures and image stacking will result in clearer nightscapes, allowing you to tease out any fine details. For star shots use manual focus, open your aperture as far as it goes (lowest f-number), shoot at ISO 1,600 for roughly 30–40 seconds, and remotely initiate the exposure. The universe becomes your canvas and the camera your brush.

Ed Rhodes View across the Cheshire Plains
www.edrhodesphotography.co.uk



I DISCOVERED this view across the Cheshire Plains during the summer months while the heather was still in bloom. I decided then that I must revisit this place during winter, full of hope for a covering of snow. This was always going to be a challenging shot, as the area is only accessible by narrow and very steep roads. However, as the weather forecast was promising I decided to set off. The road conditions dictated I could drive most of the way there, but I had to complete the remainder of the journey on foot. My efforts were rewarded with a fabulous glowing, low sun, which set the scene as I had envisaged in my mind many months before.



© STEVE SANDNER





©DIRKBERT

Sarah Brooks Morning post

www.moonfruitphotography.co.uk



THIS is a winter sunrise taken in late December 2014. I hadn't planned to go out that morning, but when I saw the thick frost and clear sky I quickly headed to a nearby location that I thought would be good. It's handy to have some local spots in mind for situations where there isn't time to travel far. Getting to know the local area, noting where the sun will rise and set throughout the year, and keeping potential compositions in mind can help to make the most of favourable conditions when they occur. Having essential kit ready to go is useful, too. I keep a set of warm clothes, a hat, scarf, gloves, and so on, along with my camera bag, so I'm able to leave quietly without waking the family.



© SARAH BROOKS

Chris Nesbit Robin

www.chrisnesbit.com



THIS shot of a robin, a much-loved species, epitomises the Christmas season for me: cold weather, frost and dense snow. In the midst of bleakness, the red-breasted robin stands out.

It was taken early in the morning as I walked my dog along the Test Way in Hampshire. Robins can be extremely inquisitive birds, often following my dog to ensure he isn't getting up to any mischief. They are also extremely territorial, so if you want to get a shot of a robin and know its location, you can revisit it over several days, knowing the bird should be there at some point.

Finding a position and composition, you can try to capture a shot with the knowledge that you can try again or adjust it over a few days if it's not quite what you're after. In the case of this shot, I was fortunate enough to get it the first time as the robin stood perfectly for me and the light was quite seasonal. Being along the river, and very cold, I would keep the camera in the warmth of my jacket to stop the lens misting over during the walk. I also carry a 36mm Kenko extension tube, which gives me the option to fire off some macro shots with minimal kit.



© CHRIS DALE

Chris Dale Snowy tree

www.chrismdale.co.uk



WINTER brings some great opportunities for landscape photography, and a deep covering of snow is well suited to minimal compositions such as this one as it gives clean, simple lines and tones. To make the most of this, look for a clear horizon as well as interesting shapes and layers in the snow.

Shooting raw is a huge advantage with snow, as it's easy to get the white balance wrong and the amount of bright white in the scene can make exposure tricky. Having more control to tweak these or recover detail during post processing can make a big difference.

This photo was taken on a local golf course early in the morning to get some warmer colour in the sky that balances the cold blue tones. To push the minimal feel I spot-removed a few areas where long grass was peeking through the snow and a small section of the horizon where fields could be seen in the distance.



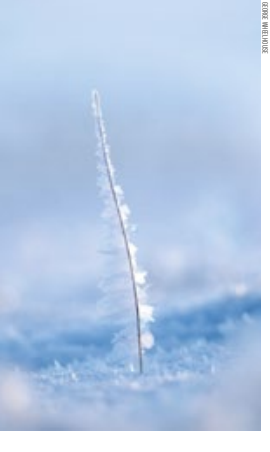
© SARAH LEWIS

Sarah Lewis Tree-lined avenue www.purplefacephotography.co.uk

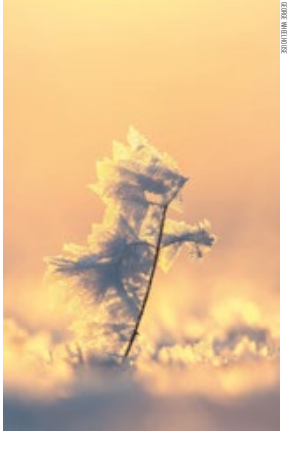


IN AN effort to keep my camera dry and warm (to avoid depleting the batteries), I wrapped it up in a scarf. I know... it's not what the professionals do, but it was warm and kept most of the important buttons dry.

What drew me to taking this shot is the way the branches arch over one another, and the way the snowflakes were so big – they weren't hard to photograph. A lot of the comments I received on this photo said the snowflakes look fake, as if they were added in afterwards, but these are definitely real. Regarding post-processing, I didn't want to do much apart from a slight change in exposure. I deliberately underexposed the shot so the whites wouldn't get blown out. I then simply brightened the image in Photoshop – and voilà! I contemplated desaturating the image, but I preferred the slight blue cast and the very subtle orange piece of grass at the bottom of the shot.



© GEORGE WHEELHOUSE



© GEORGE WHEELHOUSE

George Wheelhouse Frosted grass snail and frosted man

www.georgewheelhouse.com



WINTER can be a great time to find patterns in nature and if you come across unique weather effects such as this, take advantage of them and make photos you haven't done before. I was out on a very cold morning looking for deer, but these amazing scenes of frosted grass were a complete distraction.

There were so many interesting patterns in the hoar frost that I started to look for some that took on the appearance of something else. Some were quite simple, like the one on the far left, but then I found one that looked like a little stickman (left), and by shooting from this angle I was able to use back-lighting to bring out detail in the delicate crystalline structure. I had to underexpose this to retain the highlights, but I lightened the shadows so as not to have a result that's too contrasty.

Anita Nicholson
Thirlmere sunset
www.anitanicholsonphotography.com



MY OTHER half and I are landscape photographers who love hiking and exploring the great outdoors. Over the past couple of years we have combined our love for photography with our love for exploring the Lake District by taking up wild camping, which has enabled us to stay in the places we love even longer. Wild camping is fantastic – it's hard work carrying hiking, camping and photography gear up the fells, but the experience of being up there and taking in both sunset and sunrise, and potentially star-filled skies, makes it worth it.

This was taken on a camping trip one still, snowy winter night last February. The conditions looked perfect for a camp trip, so we packed up our gear and headed for Raven Crag, a lovely fell in the Lake District. Raven Crag may be a little fell, but the views over to the Helvellyn range and along Thirlmere are outstanding. Once we set up camp for the night, we had a cup of coffee to warm up and waited to see what sunset would do. It looked like it wouldn't do much, and had we been on just a day hike we would have probably climbed back down the fell and headed home. But shortly after sunset the sky started to glow pink, so we jumped into action, taking photos as the pink light filled the sky around us and lit the snow on the fell tops, the colour lasting for a good hour. It was an amazing sight, and one we may have missed had we not been camping on the fells.

Wild camping is a challenge, but if you love the great outdoors and landscape photography it is a fantastic adventure, and you will more than likely come home with a rewarding collection of images. Wild camping in winter is especially magical – it's a wonderful experience.



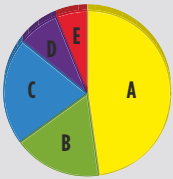
©ANITA NICHOLSON



©ANITA NICHOLSON

Anita Nicholson
Carrock Fell bog
www.anitanicholsonphotography.com

IT'S FAIR to say that most landscape photographers love winter photography, especially taking pictures of snowy or frosty scenes. Last winter in Northumberland, we barely had any snow so we headed over to the Lake District for our snow fixes. As soon as we heard reports of snow falling in the Lakes, we headed straight over and up onto the fells so as to get above the snowline. This shot was taken on our last hike of the Northern Fells (we are steadily completing all the Wainwrights, which are the 214 fells described in Alfred Wainwright's book), up Carrock Fell and along to High Pike, then back. As we approached the top of Carrock Fell, a snowstorm enveloped us and we lost the distant views. This did, however, give us a lot more fresh snow and a wonderful soft lift. As we hiked passed Carrock Fell summit, the ground became boggy. The black peaty bogs looked fantastic against the fresh crisp snow. This bog, with its tufts of grass and intense dark inkiness, caught my eye, so I stopped to take shots of it. I used a wideangle so I could get up close to the bog and still get it all in shot, and a Lee 0.9 hard grad as we were in the cloud and it was very white while the light was soft. After taking a couple of shots we quickly headed on.



In AP 16 January we asked

Do you own a mirrorless/CSC camera system or are you planning to buy one this year?

You answered

A Yes, and it's my main camera	**48%**
B Yes, and it's secondary to my DSLR system	**17%**
C No, and I've no interest in buying a CSC	**21%**
D No, but I'm planning to buy one as my main camera	**8%**
E No, but I'm planning to buy one as a secondary camera	**6%**

What you said

'I'm a year into my Canon EOS M and it travels with me everywhere'

'I own a CSC but it's secondary to my Panasonic Lumix DMC-FZ1000 bridge camera, which is more versatile'

'In two years or so, no one will even want to buy a DSLR. There's no reason to now, but the penny would have dropped by then'

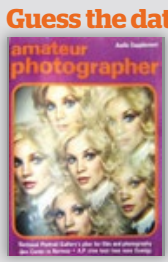
'I sold my Canon EOS 6D and 70D plus six EOS L-series lenses, and got a Fujifilm X-T1 plus three lenses and am loving them all. The results are superb!'

This week we ask

Have you used an electronic viewfinder in the past year and what did you think of it?

Vote online www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Guess the date



Every other week we post an old AP cover on our Facebook page and all you have to do is guess the issue date (day/month/year). To guess the date of this cover (above), head over to **www.facebook.com/Amateur.photographer.magazine**. Forum members can also enter via the Forum.



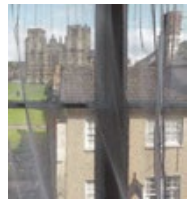
The camera in AP 16 January is a Canon AV-1. The winner is Jeff Landers from the USA, whose correct guess was the first drawn at random.

Inbox

Email amateurphotographer@timeinc.com and include your full postal address
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LETTER OF THE WEEK





ALL PHOTOGRAPHS © ANDI ANSTIS

Change of expectations

I read Stuart Humphries' letter about problems affecting older photographers (AP 9 January) with some empathy. If I say that I took my first photos in 1948 on my father's 1920s 116-size camera, it will quickly be understood where I now stand – eyesight, muscular problems and all.

I would hesitate to offer photographers of such experience gratuitous advice, except to say that with age it is perhaps necessary to change one's targets and expectations. I've given up heavy equipment and camera bags, interchangeable lenses and so on, and, using the marvellous tools of the computer, can now home-in on the images I require, and interpret them creatively.

I encourage consideration of such greats as Julia Margaret Cameron, Bill Brandt, Cartier-Bresson et al, whose memorable achievements were not diverted by the pressure of today's unending choice of equipment. Today I use a convenient bridge camera, a Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX10, and a small Panasonic Lumix DMC-TZ40.

I have included a photo from each (see above). The first, taken with the bridge camera, is of Gothic vaulting. The second is a Photoshop-interpreted shot of Wells Cathedral taken through a net-curtained window. I cannot complain about either, and therefore remain a committed amateur photographer!

David Anstis, West Sussex

There are few bad cameras these days, and as the saying goes, 'the best camera is the one that you have with you'. It's important to find a camera that suits your needs and not those of someone who produces a different style of photography, or who is in a different physical condition – Richard Sibley, deputy editor

LETTER OF THE WEEK WINS A SAMSUNG EVO PLUS 16GB MICRO SDHC CARD + MULTI-CARD READER/WRITER

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Art of movement

Thanks for the informative piece by John Wright (AP 16 January) on *The Art Of Movement* as applied to shooting movies. It was refreshing to read that a filmmaker only moves the camera when it adds something to the narrative, and to see some examples of the equipment that might be used to achieve this.

I spent many years on the technical side of broadcast television and am probably more aware than some why many amateur films don't really work, with cameras waved around and shots too short, making editing almost impossible. Keeping the camera locked off and letting the subject move through the frame was the usual advice. People shooting movies can now see how camera movement, if appropriate, should be done. Will an article on Steadicam be next?

Robert Clegg, Devon

We're glad you enjoyed the article, Robert. It is part of a series in AP that is brought to you by London Camera Exchange and Blackmagic Design – Richard Sibley, deputy editor

Losing faith

I think my love affair with Canon is coming to an end. I don't think it is as committed to me as I've been to it for the past 20 years. It doesn't produce a high-quality L lens that suits the crop factor of my 650D. I would love a 17-55mm L lens that I can use if I decide to go full frame.

I shopped around for an EF-S lens and discovered I had to order a lens hood for it. So I paid £21 for one from Canon's website. Surely if it was packaged with the lens for an extra £21, it would cost Canon less in time and p&p. The experience has left me a little deflated, and I think maybe it's time to find a company that values my custom.

Owen Hilton, BSc (Hons) MCOptom, Hertfordshire

Unfortunately, any 17-55mm L lens that would work on full frame would be huge, heavy and undoubtedly expensive, which is why Canon only makes an EF-S version for APS-C cameras. While it's not labelled as an 'L' lens, its image quality is still very impressive. We are dismayed by Canon's refusal to supply hoods with most of its lenses, which frankly seems out of touch with its customers – Andy Westlake, technical editor


Final Analysis

How the world should be?

I would like to comment on the *Final Analysis* in AP 9 January, where Roger Hicks considered the image 'Bombay', 1985, by Carl de Keyzer (see above). I quote Roger from this article: 'Of course, this is during the monsoon, so to anyone who has spent much time in India, this is a curiously comforting picture: a reminder of how the world was, and should be.'

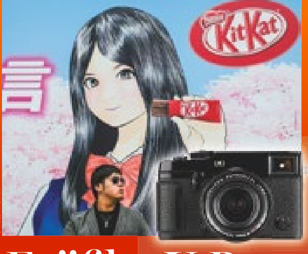
Really? Presumably Roger and his American wife (wealthy westerners in Indian terms) identify with the cruel poverty, caste and class systems, and extreme differences between the rich and poor in India. The beginning of this 'consideration' smacks of maudlin colonial elitism of the worst kind. Whatever modern India's problems and curses, they are her own and she is the better for moving forward. The old ways are and were not better, apart from perhaps for wealthy, exploitative westerners. India is moving forward and has been since 1947. Has Roger not noticed and is he still trapped in a Merchant Ivory fantasy?

It's a nice image, though. It could have been sharper, but then we may have lost its period charm à la 1950s box cameras.

Ian Douglas, via email

I am very sorry to have misled you inadvertently, Ian. I intended to refer only to the Ambassador, a symbol of India for six decades or so (see Raghubir Singh's *A Way into India*, Phaidon, 2002). Neither my wife nor I would dream of defending either poverty or caste, but we would defend the Ambassador. Yes, its time has gone, but would you deny its nostalgic appeal? I don't think many of our Indian friends would, be they Brahmin or Dalit (and we have eaten with both). An Ambassador wading through the monsoon is a symbol of comfort and safety: something with which we can all identify. Once again, I apologise for not making this clearer – Roger Hicks

In next week's issue On sale Tuesday 9 February



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Fujifilm X-Pro2

We try out Fujifilm's latest flagship mirrorless camera on the streets of Tokyo

Gardeners' world

We take a look at some of the best images from 2016's International Garden Photographer of the Year competition

Pick a project

Steve Gosling shows how to start your own photo project, while Justin Minns shares his first-hand experience of shooting his own project

Creative Photoshop

Burak Erzincanli explains how to create a successful commercial composite image using Photoshop

CONTENT FOR NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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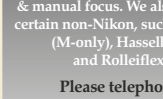
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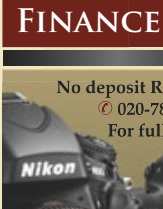
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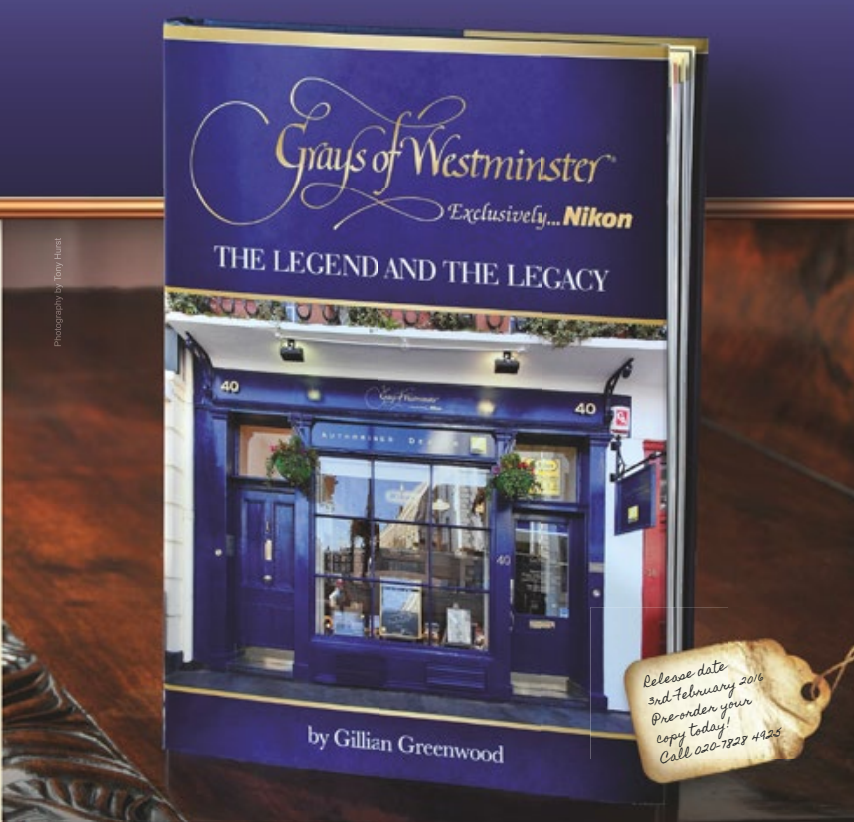
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GRAYS OF WESTMINSTER THE LEGEND AND THE LEGACY

by Gillian Greenwood

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The Forward is by the President of the Nikon Corporation of Japan.

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Lights, camera, a

Keith Bernstein shoots on-set stills for many of the world's biggest movies and TV series. He talks to **Steve Fairclough** about Clint Eastwood, Nelson Mandela and his colourful career

There's a good chance you'll have seen the work of Keith Bernstein, as over the past decade his evocative stills photography has frozen the action from blockbuster movies such as *Long Walk to Freedom* and *American Sniper*, not to mention the TV phenomenon that is *Game of Thrones*. It's just the latest stage in a fascinating career that has included two World Press Photo Awards and a lifelong association with Nelson Mandela, but more of that later.

Keith's entry into the world of shooting stills of moving pictures was working with the director Anthony Minghella on the TV pilot *The No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency*. He was on a commercial shoot in his native South Africa when, he says, 'By chance I met a publicist who said that Anthony Minghella was doing a TV series in Botswana and was looking for some of the crew to be people who didn't traditionally come from film and TV backgrounds, and did I want to put myself forward to do stills? I said yes without really knowing what it was all about. I'd been on film sets many times for newspapers and magazines, but I didn't really understand what the job was.'

Keith was hired and worked alongside Minghella. 'It was the last thing he directed because he was ill and died a couple of months after we'd finished shooting,' adds Keith. 'The film got a very good reception and a lot of publicity, so I was in the right place. I really liked the communal way of working with a film crew; I liked the whole production side and found it intriguing and interesting, so I started pushing myself much more towards film companies.'

A recommendation from actor Jim Caviezel, who Keith worked with on the TV series remake *The Prisoner*, led to a meeting with Clint Eastwood's producers. They were in South Africa scouting for the movie *Invictus*, which tells the story of South Africa's triumph in the 1995 Rugby World Cup and Nelson Mandela's role in it. In fact, earlier in his career, Keith had documented the election of Mandela as President of South Africa.

As Keith explains: 'The producers had done quite a lot of research and I think they had seen a lot of the Mandela pictures without associating them with me. Clint is extremely loyal to his crew – a lot of them have been with him for 20 or 30 years – but it was at a time when he had just made a change from his stills photographer, otherwise

ction...



Behind the scenes on the TV series *The No.1 Ladies Detective Agency* (2008)





ALL IMAGES © KEITH MINNION

I wouldn't have been interviewed. We started on *Invictus* four or five months after that.'

The production process

Since the 2009 *Invictus* shoot, Keith's on-set work has included every Clint Eastwood film bar one, which he was unavailable for, including *Jersey Boys*, *American Sniper* and the yet-to-be-released *Sully*. So how does the film process work for a stills photographer? 'It varies from film to film,' says Keith. 'You normally get the script two to three weeks ahead of shooting, but often it doesn't especially help photographically. You can't always predict which scenes the strong publicity images will come from, so the most dramatic sections of the script don't necessarily produce the best pictures – the moment when the lead actor has his head blown off is unlikely to be released as a publicity still [as it would give the plot away] even if it is a strong, dramatic image.'

Keith likes to attend production







meetings and adds: 'These meetings are more skewed towards the technical, location and production crew, and not to stills, but I do think the more you know of what's going on as a whole, the better.' Keith is hired for the duration of the shoot, 'which can be from eight weeks to a long shoot – *Long Walk to Freedom* was 17 weeks. I'm there every day from call time until wrap, so it's a basic ten-hour day and can be longer than that.'

Keith has to shoot with available light and/or the movie lighting set-ups, 'Somebody like the director of photography (DP) Seamus McGarvey lights very beautifully – exquisite lighting that works cinematically but also works fantastically well for stills,' he says. 'With someone like Seamus you might find yourself very close to the "A" camera (the main camera) because he's lit it for that viewpoint. There are other DPs whose lighting might be more harsh or contrasty, where it might work for the cinematic camera but often you find yourself a bit better off on the other side working against the light if it's better for a still. I'm not trying to duplicate what the camera is seeing – I want to cover the scene and the key moments of the action, but I'm not there to be a mimic of what the main camera is seeing. I'm there to provide images that are going to help sell the film. That's the foundation of the job.'

Top left: Sean Penn on the set of *The Gunman* (2015)

Left: Bradley Cooper as real-life Navy SEAL sniper Chris Kyle in *American Sniper* (2014)

Top right: Actor and director Ben Affleck in political thriller *Argo* (2012)

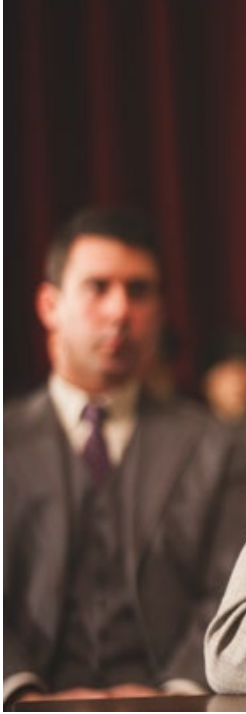
Above: Clint Eastwood in baseball drama *Trouble with the Curve* (2012)

Shooting digitally on-set

Keith shoots digitally using three Canon EOS 5D Mark III bodies, which are housed in Jacobson 'blimps' – soundproofed black boxes that ensure the minimum amount of noise is created by the cameras. He also puts the cameras into silent mode. 'Classically, one of the cameras will have a 24-70mm f/2.8 lens and the other will have a 70-200mm f/2.8,' he says. 'I've got every other type of lens, but if you go much wider than a 24mm you're going to run into problems with seeing the edge of the set or lighting stands; all that stuff can be taken out [in post-production], but you try to shoot it as purely as possible. If the light levels are way down so you need higher ISOs, the EOS 5D Mark III is mind-boggling in terms of performance.'

Keith adds: 'I always try to shoot at f/2.8 if I can. I very seldom vary from that – it'll have to be a very specific shot, like two talking heads together where you know you're going to shoot it tight, so it will be at 105mm or 135mm, and it's going to be a ridiculous picture







Above: Nelson Mandela speaks

Right: Leonardo DiCaprio as J. Edgar Hoover in *J. Edgar* (2011)

Below: Idris Elba as Nelson Mandela in *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom* (2013)

if there's no depth to it at all… so you won't be at f/2.8.

An average day of shooting is 400 to 600 frames. If I come back with more than 600 images I find that I've probably missed the point of the day or the arc of the story and have over-compensated by shooting too much. Everything is shot as raw files – if I'm in an area where it's safe to download then I'll be downloading during the day, but if it's on a windy, wet location I'll do it at the end of the day. Everything gets transferred to a hard drive, which is rotated every couple of days to the film company – they download it and send it back. It's backed up about three times by me at the end of each day.'

Keith does a quick edit to cut out obvious mistakes, like actors with their eyes closed or stupid facial expressions. 'A lot of the companies want to see images completely unadjusted because they will maybe try to match a look towards the grading of the film or production and you won't be aware of quite what that's going to be,' he says. 'On-set I use [Adobe] Bridge as a very quick, fast-loading way of editing, just to make sure the mistakes that I've made can go out before it's sent on to the film company. For my own work I use CS6 and Lightroom.'

Keith adds: 'There are constraints – it's not like you're in charge. You're working on somebody else's set with all the other people to fit in around and all the constraints that go along with that. But at the same time, you're largely given a free hand to shoot anything you want, as long as you're providing them with the material that they want to see.'

Publicity and posters

Unsurprisingly, the key purpose of the on-set stills is publicity, as Keith explains: 'Increasingly bizarrely, because in so many ways photography is kind of stuttering along, in movies they really need stills more than ever because they have to recoup their huge investment. One of the ways they're going to do that is by publicising the picture; that's by getting clicks on the internet – it used to be the poster outside the cinema and a nice picture in the newspapers and magazines. That still applies, but it's now increasingly moved towards social media.'

The movie poster aspect does still come into play with Keith working in one of two ways – via composites created by a combination of unit stills shot during production or by poster 'specials', when actors are either called back post-production for a specific style of poster or are shot against clean backgrounds during production.

'The specials are generally because the film companies are probably not clear exactly how they're going to sell the film,' explains Keith. 'So you'll shoot with very bland, shadowless lighting, where you might have six or seven minutes with the actors between scenes. The actors will come off stage and have a very simple white



'I really liked the communal way of working with a film crew... I found it intriguing'

backdrop and you'll shoot them from every conceivable angle as quickly as you can. It's just to give the film companies raw material that they can work with, because they don't know what the end product is going to be.'

The Mandela connection

Keith's past four or five years of work have been pretty much back-to-back on movie and TV sets, with any time off happening during natural breaks between filming schedules or when film projects have collapsed for various reasons. His film work has also brought a neat symmetry to his life with the chance to shoot Nelson Mandela at the end of filming *Invictus*. In fact, Keith's father, Lionel 'Rusty' Bernstein, had been a friend and ANC colleague of Mandela's in the late 1950s and early '60s before both were arrested at Rivonia, which led to the treason trial that saw Mandela incarcerated and the Bernstein family fleeing South Africa.

As mentioned earlier, Keith had photographed Mandela in his days as a documentary photographer in 1993 and 1994 when he shared a flat in Johannesburg with the legendary English photojournalist Tom Stoddart and covered the South African election. Indeed, the movie *Long Walk to Freedom* saw Keith shooting the Hollywood version of what he had photographed for real approximately 15 years earlier.

Keith recalls: 'The last time [I saw Mandela] was towards the end of *Invictus* – it was his 90th birthday and he was staying in Cape Town, where we were shooting. The film production company had arranged for Clint's family to go and visit Mandela at the hotel where he was staying in Cape Town, and I was there to photograph that. By then he was 90 and very forgetful, and although he was a big guy he was physically quite frail and shaky. It was the start of his real decline into old age.'



In a career spanning more than 40 years, Keith Bernstein has worked across many genres of photography, such as music, commercial and documentary, and now focuses on shooting stills on TV and movie sets. He has won two World Press Photo awards, covered the infamous 'Black Hawk Down' incident in Somalia in the 1990s and is currently planning a fresh project documenting jazz musicians. To see more of Keith's work, visit **www.keithbernstein.co.uk**

He adds, 'I had that connection [with Mandela] through my father, but I didn't know him before he went to jail because I was far too young to have any recognition of who he was. Working with him – and the same is true for Clint Eastwood – has had more of an impact on me in hindsight than at the time. At the time, in 1994 and 1995, when I went out and spent two weeks travelling with him each day, those days were so intense, so packed and so frenetic that you were so caught up in shooting and worrying about f-stops and shutter speeds that you didn't really have time to sit back and think.'

Perhaps one day when he does sit back and think about his career, Keith will realise just what an amazing ride it has been. AP

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Send a set of pictures of 5-8 images relating to the theme 'Landscape' to apcompetitions@timeinc.com, with the word 'Landscape' and your name as the subject heading, by Friday 13 May 2016. Images should be in JPEG format and no bigger than 800 pixels on the longest edge. Include your name, address and a contact number in the email. Images from the first-prize winner will go forward to the international round of the competition (see below). First, second and third-prize winners will be chosen by the editorial staff of *Amateur Photographer*. The results will be published in AP 18 June 2016.

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Put a spring in your step

The appearance of snowdrops is a sign that spring is on its way, but photographing them has unique challenges, as Robert Canis explains

ALL PICTURES © ROBERT CANIS

Snowdrops are among the first flowers to bloom in the new year and are often referred to as the harbingers of spring. They're described as 'three drops of milk hanging from a stem' and are certainly one of our most photogenic and widespread flowers, making them the perfect subject to help shake off the winter blues. Even on a cold gloomy day, the sight of snowdrops is enough to lift your spirits.

More often than not, snowdrops are seen in large numbers and in some places form swathes of nodding white heads. It's a wonderful sight, particularly on a bright sunny day, but their sheer volume can be quite an assault on your senses and it can be difficult to know where to begin. Depending on the conditions and whether or not I am able to make a return visit, I prefer to work in a relatively methodical manner. I begin by capturing the scene with a wideangle lens and, more often than not, position the flowers very close to the lens, which can often produce dramatic results, putting the plant in context. Once satisfied, I move on to recording whole plants and find that lenses of at least 100mm are perfect for this, providing control over background coverage. My personal favourite lenses when shooting with the full-frame Nikon D750 are the 105mm and 200mm Micro options. Look for those plants that are on the periphery as opposed to working on those in and among all the others. This will not only make isolating a single plant more straightforward but will also lessen any chances of you inadvertently flattening nearby snowdrops.



Introduce flare, or shoot into the sun, to give a soft ethereal glow

I then move in, closer still, perhaps filling the frame with just the head. You'll need a dedicated macro lens for this or, at the very least, a set of extension tubes or close-up lenses that screw onto the lens's front element, just like a filter. These come in varying strengths measured in dioptres and are an excellent way of enabling you to get closer to the subject. Beware, however, as, just like most things, you get what you pay for, so buy the best you can afford.

Where to focus

When holding flower photography workshops, I am often asked: 'Where do you focus?' To me, this depends on what part of the flower dominates the frame and the aperture you have selected. If you are photographing the whole plant and the stem occupies the greater part, then I would focus on this. If the flowering head fills the frame, then I focus on the front



Use light, or shoot from an unusual angle, to produce a more thoughtful composition

petal. To be on the safe side, focus on different parts of the flower, then see which one you prefer when you view the images on your computer screen at home.

Once I have covered all the bases and I'm happy in the knowledge that I have captured the flowers in various ways, I look at producing more thoughtful compositions utilising interesting light, or shooting from an unusual angle. This is why it's helpful to find snowdrops growing close to where you live as you have the luxury of repeat visits at different times of the day. I'm fortunate in having two such places relatively close to my home: one is a church with an

TOP TIPS

1 Get down low for impact

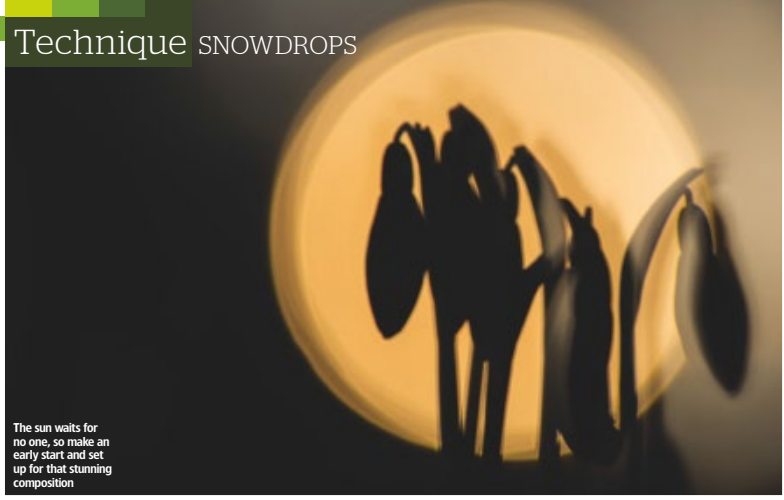
It may not be the most comfortable way to work, but images taken from ground level tend to have a greater impact. This is particularly the case with shots taken with a telephoto lens. To make life easier, use the camera's articulated LCD screen, or attach a right-angle viewing attachment.

2 Use live view for accurate focusing

Live view has to be one of the best features of a digital camera for close-up photography. Don't rely on your camera's AF, as depth of field at close quarters is minimal. Switch the camera to MF, activate live view and zoom in on the area you want to appear sharp, then focus manually.

3 Shoot into the sun

Through working at either end of the day and utilising the low, warm, directional sunlight, you can create images that will really stand out. Handhold the camera rather than set up a tripod, select a wide aperture and move among the flowers, shifting focus until you see a composition that works.



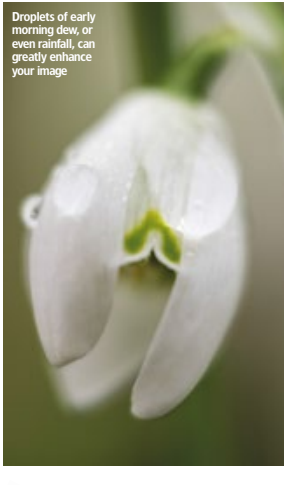
The sun waits for no one, so make an early start and set up for that stunning composition

accompanying graveyard where wild flowers grow, and the other is a very secluded woodland on the North Downs. Both offer different perspectives, and the graveyard is handy for those early morning visits, where just a short walk of 50 metres is all that's required.

Set up early

If you are up for an early start, make sure you arrive well before the sun rises as you will need to give yourself ample time to seek out any potential compositions. The sun waits for no one – 30 minutes after sunrise and that's it. After this, the light becomes too harsh and that golden glow has gone. However, you needn't despair, as there are sure to be lots of places where the sun hasn't yet reached the flowers and you can continue shooting, such as within the shadow cast by a tree or church.

Digital is wonderful in that it enables us to experiment without additional cost through failures, so look at creating images with a difference. Shoot into the sun and introduce flare to give a soft, ethereal glow; silhouette snowdrops against the rising or setting sun; or shoot through other snowdrops, creating a white vignette. Lastly, don't be a slave to your tripod. Sometimes it's best to free yourself from its burden so you can wander around, camera in hand, and let your creativity flow. AP



Droplets of early morning dew, or even rainfall, can greatly enhance your image

LOCATION GUIDE

Snowdrops favour damp woodlands and the sides of streams, so my advice is get out there and explore. Graveyards are among the best places – they never fail and you can visit them at all hours of the day. There are also numerous country estates, some of which are listed here, that open their gardens throughout February in celebration of the snowdrop.

Anglesey Abbey, Cambridgeshire
Attingham Park, Shropshire
Chirk Castle, Wrexham
Fountains Abbey, North Yorkshire
Kingston Lacy, Dorset
Nymans, West Sussex
Goodnestone Park Gardens, Kent
Birks of Aberfeldy, Perth and Kinross
Hopetoun House, Edinburgh
Afon Dwyfor Valley, Gwynedd
Dyffryn Gardens, Vale of Glamorgan
The Argory, Dungannon

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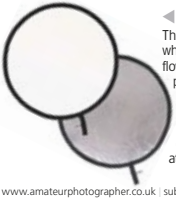
Beanbag

This will get you much lower than a tripod. It creates a more stable platform and will enable you to work between plants without causing damage to other foliage.



Polarising filter

The leaves of snowdrops are surprisingly shiny and can be distracting. A polarising filter will help to reduce the glare and make the colour of the leaves more vibrant.



Reflector

This is a necessity when shooting flowers as it will provide fill into those otherwise dark areas. A piece of A5 card with foil attached is ideal.

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The graphic shapes and a polarised sky make for a perfect combination in this shot of Birmingham's iconic Selfridges Building
Olympus OM-D E-M5, 20mm, 1/250sec at f/8, ISO 200, polariser

Go to **town**

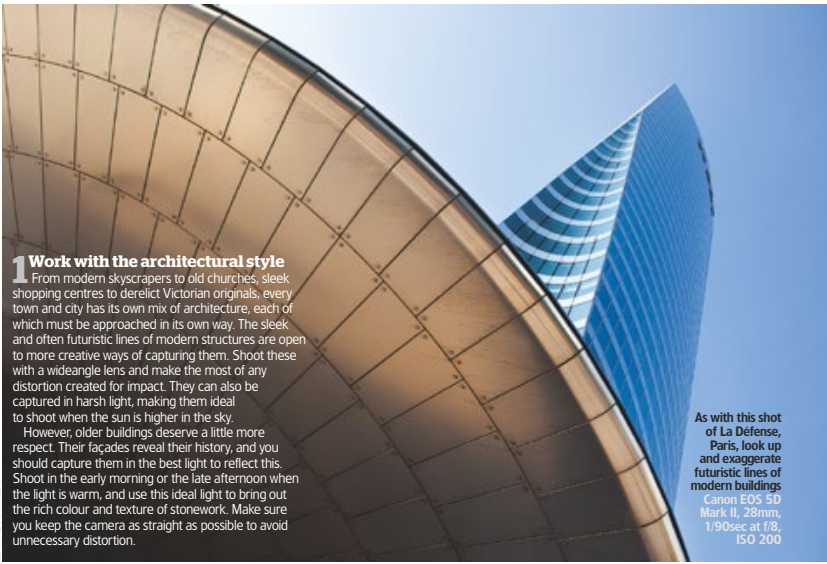
Towns and cities can be noisy, dirty, busy and stressful, which is what makes them a perfect and dynamic subject for photography. **Craig Roberts** explains how to make the most of the urban environment

On a sunny day, it's natural for most photographers to head out into the countryside. A short drive can get you to a beautiful stretch of coastline or a sweeping landscape here in the UK. However, in your rush, you probably passed another location bursting with photographic potential: the urban landscape.

Your town, along with every other town and city in the country, is a fabulous subject, no matter how boring or dull it may seem at first.

All towns have a mixture of old and new architecture, both of which are worthy subjects. At first glance, you might think of a newly built office block as a monstrosity, but look more closely and you will see it is a work of art, designed by architects with an acute eye for detail. You can either visit a town early on a Sunday morning and have the place to yourself, or try going to the same location first thing on a Monday morning and be confronted with a busy, bustling environment that is full of life and drama.

Our city streets are exciting places. They constantly change with the direction of light, the people who pass through them and the contrasts between all the buildings. There are new views everywhere, from wideangle vistas to interesting abstracts. There's noise and chaos, yet calm contemplation at the turn of a corner. From busy high streets to peaceful green spaces, the urban landscape offers every opportunity a photographer could hope for.



1 Work with the architectural style

From modern skyscrapers to old churches, sleek shopping centres to derelict Victorian originals, every town and city has its own mix of architecture, each of which must be approached in its own way. The sleek and often futuristic lines of modern structures are open to more creative ways of capturing them. Shoot these with a wideangle lens and make the most of any distortion created for impact. They can also be captured in harsh light, making them ideal to shoot when the sun is higher in the sky.

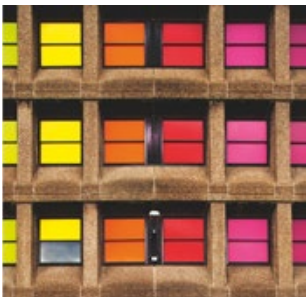
However, older buildings deserve a little more respect. Their façades reveal their history, and you should capture them in the best light to reflect this. Shoot in the early morning or the late afternoon when the light is warm, and use this ideal light to bring out the rich colour and texture of stonework. Make sure you keep the camera as straight as possible to avoid unnecessary distortion.

As with this shot of La Défense, Paris, look up and exaggerate futuristic lines of modern buildings
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 28mm, 1/90sec at f/8, ISO 200

ALL PICTURES © DAVID ROBERTS

2 Focus on details

Changing from a wideangle lens to a telephoto means you can crop closer on your urban subjects and concentrate on the more intricate details in the view (below). Shooting abstracts is all about looking for shapes, patterns and colours within the scene. Look for areas of light and shade, diagonal lines and any reflections created by the abundance of glass used in a city. Don't be afraid to tilt the camera if you need to, as it suits the details, and make the most of it.



Fill a frame with strong lines and colour, like with this council building in Barnsley, South Yorkshire
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 24mm, 1/180sec at f/5.6, ISO 800



In this night image of London's Canary Wharf, the lights give a new look
Olympus OM-D E-M1, 12mm, 8sec at f/8, ISO 200, tripod

3 Work into the dusk

One great advantage of shooting in an urban environment is that you can continue with your work even when the sun has gone down. As day turns to night, your chosen location is lit by different light sources as the street lights and interior lights of buildings illuminate the environment. Grab a tripod, connect a cable to your camera and get set for some great new possibilities. Your exposures will run into seconds or even minutes, but in that time, all sorts of things can happen.



4 Shoot from low angles

Like many photographers, I shoot most of my images from standing height, but there is a whole new perspective to be had by crouching down and shooting low down. Shooting from pavement level gives a worm's-eye view of the world and it's amazing how different things look from down there. Use a wideangle lens to make the most of these exciting new angles, filling the foreground with any interesting feature you can find.

Include drainage grating, cobbled streets, road markings, reflections in puddles after rain and even people's legs to fill the foreground. Use a small aperture to make the most of depth of field, and focus around a third of the way into the view to maximise this.

Use a digital camera's LCD screen to help frame your shots, or, if your camera has Wi-Fi, connect it to your smartphone and use this as your viewfinder.

In this shot of Shoreditch, London, crouching down meant filling the foreground with features unique to the urban environment
Olympus Pen E-P5, 12mm, 1/125sec at f/8, ISO 200, 0.9 ND soft grad

5 Fit a polariser

A polariser is a fantastic filter for adding impact to your shots. On a sunny day you can use one to deepen the blue of the sky, which will look great against the sleek lines of a modern building (below). Polarisers can also be used to reduce glare and reflections from any glass surface, again adding impact by increasing contrast. Remember, when enriching the sky polarisers only work at a 90˚ angle to the sun, but they work at most angles when reducing glare from windows.





7 Convert to black & white

Shooting in black & white or converting on the computer adds a gritty feel to images, and reduces them to the elements of light and shade. Removing the colour focuses the eye more on the subject and can often tell a better story.

A less modern scene, like this street in Halifax, West Yorkshire, suits the black & white treatment
Olympus OM-D E-M5, 20mm, 1/60sec at f/8, ISO 200, 0.6 ND soft grad



6 Include people in the frame

With many of your views you might prefer not to include people in your shots, but this is the time to embrace them as part of your composition. Just like traffic, they can provide an interesting addition when captured with a slower shutter speed, but you can also capture people in their own right (above). This takes a keen eye and perfect timing, but people make great subjects to shoot candidly. Preset your camera to capture those brief moments in time.



8 Deal with the jobsworths

One burden when shooting in an urban environment is dealing with exuberant security guards. However, if you are on public land (in other words, most streets), you are well within your rights to carry on shooting. So, be polite, stand your ground and explain that you are merely shooting for yourself and within the law of where you can point your camera. Many security guards are just interested in your intentions, but even if you are using a tripod you can still carry on shooting.



9 Introduce movement

You can add impact and drama to your urban images by capturing movement. A slower shutter speed and some fast-moving traffic capture the business of a modern city, where everyone is rushing from A to B. A red bus, colourful taxi or even a splash of yellow from a construction truck will add movement and colour to your images, bringing them alive and really complementing the buildings in the background.

Use a tripod or your camera's image stabilisation to introduce blur with a slow shutter speed
Olympus OM-D E-M5, 45mm, 1/10sec at f/5.6, ISO 200, 0.9 ND standard filter



Inside this Glasgow shopping centre, the staircases and escalators make for interesting results
Canon T90, 50mm, 1/15sec at f/5.6, ISO 100

10 It's not all about the outdoors

If a sudden downpour catches you out, head inside and continue shooting. Whether it's a museum or art gallery, shopping centre or even the local train station, there are often shots to be had. Increase sensitivity to ISO 800, change the white balance to match the lighting, and look for details and interesting features in this new unexpected location.



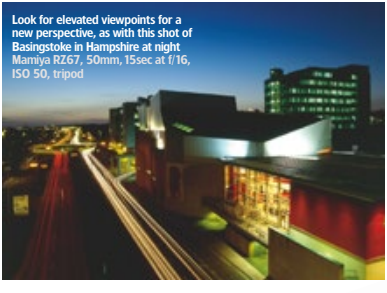
11 Close to home

Your own town is as good a location as any, although you often need to look at it with fresh eyes We can become so familiar with our own environment that we forget what there is to shoot. View it as a photographer rather than a resident, but use your local knowledge to get the best views. You'll know how to access each location, where any roadworks are taking place and perhaps even where the sun illuminates a certain building at different times of the day. Even with this useful info, you'll quickly realise how easily you missed some great photographic potential as you view the location with your photographer's head on.

This simple Durham street offers exciting possibilities
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 70-200mm at 70mm, 1/10sec at f/16, ISO 200, tripod

12 Take the high view

Another advantage of shooting in a town is that you can often get a higher viewpoint to capture another perspective. Whether it's climbing a few stairs, getting the lift to the top of a building or even going to the top level of a car park, this new view will add to your portfolio of images and capture the urban landscape from above. You can shoot wide for the full view, or zoom in on details with a telephoto, but both will give you interesting results.



Look for elevated viewpoints for a new perspective, as with this shot of Basingstoke in Hampshire at night
Mamiya RZ67, 50mm, 15sec at f/16, ISO 50, tripod



13 Go long

By using a tripod in the daytime, combined with an extreme ND filter, you can capture some dynamic and interesting results with a long exposure. With movement from clouds in the sky and any water interest that many cities have, you can blur these with an exposure of 1–3 minutes, and capture the contrast with the static subjects of the city. This is a particularly useful technique when the weather is overcast, and offers a different way of capturing your chosen city.

The urban environment is a great place to try out extreme ND filters
Olympus OM-D E-M5, 20mm, 20sec at f/11, ISO 100, Big Stopper, tripod

14 Research using Google Maps

With any new location you visit, it's worth doing a bit of forward planning to make the most of your day. Using websites such as Google Maps will help you identify possible locations, and you can even use Street View to see the exact location and spot to shoot from. The satellite view also gives you an idea of where the sun will be positioned throughout the day, although The Photographer's Ephemeris app (www.photoephemeris.com) elaborates on this, marking the sun's position on a map throughout the year.



15 Play it safe

This applies to where you stand, as well as shooting in an environment where there are other people around. You are working in a busy location so avoid getting in people's way and, most of all, be aware of traffic all round you – don't get run over! If shooting in off-street areas or at night, then keep your gear discreet, too. In these places, one camera and one lens is ideal as you don't want to attract attention.

If you are nervous about shooting at night, take a friend or partner with you. Most locations are safe when there are other people around, but it always pays to be sensible. AP

Craig's new ebook, ***Urban Landscapes: A Photographer's Guide***, is now available to download from **www.craigrobertsphotography.co.uk**, priced £5.99

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LOCATION GUIDE

Dancing Ledge

Flanked by dramatic cliffs, this Jurassic Coast outcrop in Dorset is well worth the effort, as **Mark Bauer** explains





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LOCATED about four miles west of Swanage in Dorset, Dancing Ledge is a flat area of rock at the base of a cliff. It gets its name from the patterns the waves sometimes make when they wash over its flat surface. It takes a bit of effort to get there, as you have to climb down and then back up a steep hill, and to reach some of the best spots involves a bit of scrambling, but it's more than worth it.

To get to the nearest parking spot (about a mile from Dancing Ledge), drive to the village of Langton Matravers just off the A351 west of Swanage. Coming from Swanage, go past the post office and turn left down Durnford Drove. Continue to the end of the single-track road and you will find a small car park.

Walk through the gate at the end of the car park onto the footpath and continue past Spyway Farm. Head for the gate at the far end of the second field and follow the path down the steep hill. Climb over the stile at the bottom and walk down to Dancing Ledge. There are good views both east and west from the small cliff above it. From the western end you can shoot along the whole of the ledge, and if you're feeling agile you can get down onto it. The best access is from the eastern side of the cliff, where the drop is smallest. You'll need to climb down about 5ft (1.5m), but don't jump as the surface is very slippery.





ALL PICTURES © MARK BAUER

Above: The cliffs above the ledge are a great vantage point for shooting the sunrise

Above right: From the western end there are fine views along the Jurassic Coast, making it a superb sunset location in winter

Right: The bathing pool creates foreground interest for sunrise shots in winter. Here, two shots were blended together





Mark Bauer

Mark has been a full-time landscape photographer for more than ten years. Based in Dorset, he takes his inspiration from the beauty of the landscapes in South-West England. **www.markbauerphotography.com**



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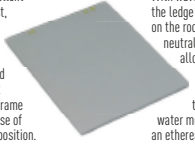
Walking boots

It's often tempting to wear wellies on coastal shoots, but good grip is essential on the slippery surface of the ledge. With quality boots you'll also appreciate the ankle support on the walk down.



Lenses

With so much excellent foreground interest, wideangle lenses are the order of the day. Get in close to foreground interest, making it loom large in the frame and creating a sense of depth in your composition.



ND filters

With waves washing over the ledge and crashing on the rocks below, neutral density filters allow you to extend your shutter speeds to record the water movement as an ethereal mist.



Shooting advice

Time to visit

Winter is definitely the best time for shooting at Dancing Ledge. From early October through to the end of February the sun rises over the sea, and from mid-November until the end of January it also sets over the sea. Daytime shots are possible all-year round, but the most atmospheric images are definitely to be had at the end of the day – especially in low light with long exposures turning the waves misty as they wash up over the ledge.

There is a small tidal swimming pool in the ledge, which was blasted out of the rock in Victorian times. It makes excellent foreground interest for both sunrise and sunset shots, especially at high tide. There are also lots of fossils in the ledge, some of which are quite large. They make interesting studies in themselves, or can be used in the foreground of a wider view and provide a real reminder of why this stretch of coastline is known as the Jurassic Coast.

Food and lodging

Dancing Ledge is just around the corner from Swanage, a popular seaside resort which has a number of good B&Bs. Finding somewhere to stay out of season, when Dancing Ledge looks its best, shouldn't be a problem. Visit www.virtual-swanage.co.uk for some suggestions. There is also no shortage of places to eat and drink in Swanage. If you've worked up an appetite after a dawn shoot, the High Street Café does an excellent fry-up. Conversely, if you're looking for somewhere at the other end of the day, The Black Swan Inn has a good range of ales and serves excellent food.

Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them



Quiraing Sunrise

2 Here Nick has succeeded in capturing the warm morning light suspended above a vast and pleasant landscape
Canon EOS 6D, 17-40mm, 5secs at f/16, ISO 50, soft grad, hard grad

Chemical Beach

3 Nick visited this location for the sunset, but the colours never developed. Instead, he attempted to create a composition where the rocks were almost symmetrical
Canon EOS 6D, 17-40mm, 20secs at f/16, ISO 50, soft grad, hard grad

Fiery Sunrise

4 Nick found this saturated scene in Old Hartley in Whitley Bay. The sky has lit up with a golden light and Nick has used the elements to guide our eye towards the lighthouse in the background
Canon EOS 6D, 17-40mm, 0.2sec at f/16, ISO 400, soft grad, hard grad



Nick Watson, Newcastle upon Tyne



'For as long as I can remember my dad has had cameras, and I spent lots of time with him in the Lake District when I was younger,' says Nick. 'I saved for months to buy my first DSLR, a Canon EOS 550D, and it spiralled from there.' Nick is especially fond of shooting landscapes, as you never find the same conditions twice. Even if he has visited a location several times, he always finds something new and beautiful to shoot. If you'd like to see more of Nick's work, visit www.njw-images.co.uk.

The Fairy Pools

1 The strong light of the day has lit up the rocks at the bottom of the pool, giving this image a solid foreground interest
Canon EOS 6D, 17-40mm, 25secs at f/11, ISO 100, Little Stopper, soft grad



HeliconSoft The two **Reader Portfolio** winners chosen every week will receive a copy of **Helicon Focus Pro** innovative software worth $200. Visit www.heliconsoft.com

Helicon Focus is designed to merge several differently focused images into a fully focused one, thus allowing extreme depth of field. You can produce sharp images in one click, retouch results with special brushes and enjoy all the benefits of state-of-the-art technology to make your images stand out

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Please see the 'Send us your pictures' section on page 3 for details or visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/portfolio





4

St Mary's Lighthouse

5 Nick has shot this location in Whitley Bay many times, but on this occasion decided to try something different. He waded out across the causeway and as a result achieved a nice clean foreground

Canon EOS 6D, 17-40mm, 0.6sec at f/16, ISO 50, soft grad, hard grad

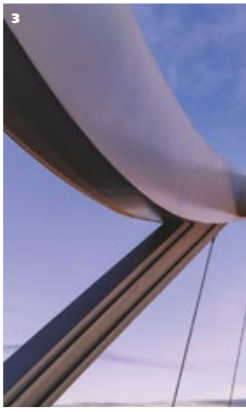


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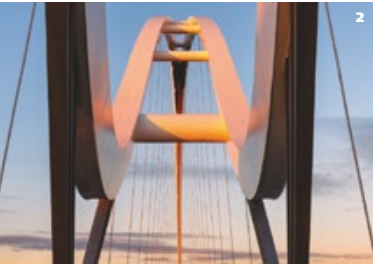


Infinity Bridge 9

1 Shooting from this angle has meant that Mark has been able to capture not only the beautiful structure but also its reflection in the still water, It's a compositional element that creates a strong balance Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 17mm, 20secs at f/11, ISO 100







Infinity Bridge 2

2 The strength of this image lies in its subtlety. While it's easy to focus entirely on the composition, the nicest element lies in the contrast between shade and golden light
Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm, 1/13sec at f/11, ISO 100

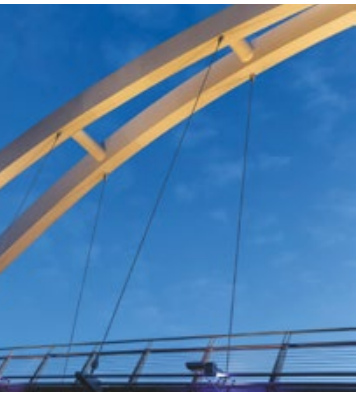
Infinity Bridge 1

3 Here we find an excellent example of the virtues of symmetry in architecture. There's something pleasing about the simple arrangements of shapes and lines
Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm, 1/10sec at f/11, ISO 100

Mark Sykes, West Yorkshire

The art of photography gives Mark a nice excuse to visit a variety of locations across the world. He loves to shoot landscapes in the USA as well as architecture, both new and old. For his architecture shots he especially likes to capture the design and details to pay homage to the craftsmen who put the work in to building the structures. In this series of shots, Mark has photographed the Infinity Bridge in Stockton-on-Tees.





Infinity Bridge 5
4 By framing his image in this way, Mark has featured an impressive leading line as our gaze is led from the top right corner to the other side of the uncluttered frame
Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm, 2.5secs at f/11, ISO 100

Infinity Bridge 6
5 Nick has given the structure plenty of room to breathe by allowing some negative space to inhabit much of the frame. In this way we can get a good idea of the subject
Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm, 6secs at f/11, ISO 100

Infinity Bridge 8
6 This image works as a good companion piece to the first shot. This time, the bridge is shot flat-on, with the shimmering water rendering the reflection abstract
Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm, 6secs at f/11, ISO 100







Appraisal

Expert advice and tips on improving your photography from **Damien Demolder**

BEFORE



AFTER



In dark situations, where a torch is the only source of light, shoot in raw and use image-editing software to draw down the contrasts

Caveman cooking

Callan Stroud

Pentax K-52, 50mm, 1/15sec, ISO 3,200

WHEN working in the dark by torchlight, lamp light or by any small light source, there seems to be a great temptation for photographers to increase the contrast of their images. This certainly gives them punch and impact, but it often hides masses of detail and thus critical parts of the story.

Callan has gone to some lengths to get this picture of what looks like a caver heating some beans, and has cleverly spotted that there was a good shot to be had in the situation. I expect that the scene was pretty atmospheric, and the light from the head lamp in the steam of the hot pan was probably what made him reach for his camera.

If we were there, our eyes would be able to adjust to the different brightness levels of the scene, so when we looked at the cooker's face we would be able to see the detail, just as we would be able to see the faint light on the face of his companion, the surface of the rock face and the gravel on the ground. For Callan to give us a sense of what it was like to be there at that moment he needs to try to show us all those things at the same time. And that requires a low-contrast image that opens shadows and tames highlights, not a high-contrast picture that conceals the vital elements of the story.

I've created a new version that gives up its secrets through low contrast and lifted shadow areas, and which gives us a much clearer idea of what is going on. The trick in these situations is to shoot in raw mode and use your image-processing software to draw down the natural contrast of the camera.

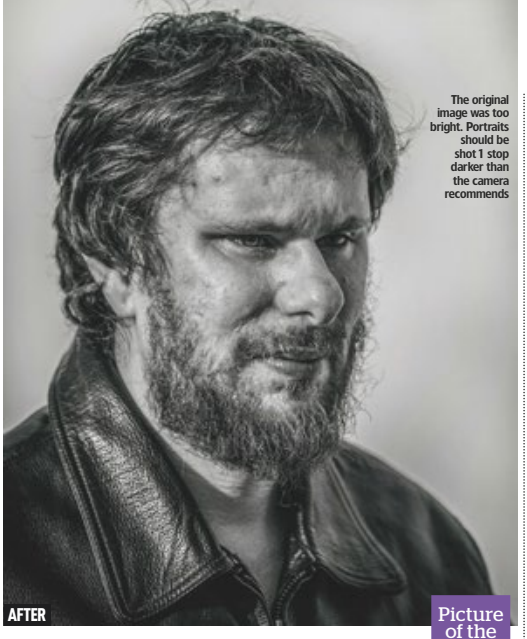
'If we were there, our eyes would be able to adjust to the different brightness levels'

We often think that we need to record things exactly as they are, but cameras and eyes don't work in the same way. We need to show things rather as we see them, and that usually requires a degree of manipulation of the imperfect photographic process.

Win! Send up to six prints, slides or images on CD (include the original files from the camera along with your versions on the CD). Tell us about the pictures and include details of equipment used and exposure settings. Send your images to *Appraisal* at the address on page 19. Enclose an SAE if you want them returned. The picture of the week will receive a year's digital subscription to AP worth £79.99

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The original image was too bright. Portraits should be shot 1 stop darker than the camera recommends

Shades of grey
David Bechelet

Nikon D300, 105mm, 1/5000sec at f/3.5, ISO 400

WE DON'T often get portraits sent in for *Appraisal*, so David gets a good mark to begin with. Initially, though, that flying start wasn't going to be enough, because I picked this picture as an example of how not to do things. But once I changed the 'exposure', I realised what a powerful image it is. The reason I didn't pick it as a winner to begin with is because I couldn't see much detail in the sitter's face – it is way too bright.

It is common to get exposure wrong in portraits, and in this example it is easy to see why it happened. The man's jacket is black, and his hair is dark, so the camera sees lots of darkness and wants to brighten things up. The result is that the skin is burned out and featureless. The solution is only about 1-stop's worth of darker exposure, and a more moderate contrast applied in post-processing. I brought down the highlights and lifted the shadows, and then added a touch of cool tone to the darker areas.

When you can see the face, and appreciate the textures and the form of the man's head and face, the picture becomes really rather good – it is interesting and engaging.

Picture of the week



I think for most portraits we need to expose at least ½ a stop darker than the camera recommends – and very often much more. In the past we used to bracket exposure and have the opportunity to be surprised by which frame we liked best. These days the promise of fixing it later prevents us from seeing the alternatives – and we often fix nothing later because we can't see what is wrong. Good job, though, David. You win my picture of the week award.



Cluny's original shot was cropped to balance the amount of wall on either side of the centre recess



Recess
Cluny MacPherson

Olympus OM-D E-M1, 1/100sec, ISO 100

CLUNY has sent in this pleasant scene showing an amphora and a pair of cups in the recess of a wall. It has classical overtones and looks like something you might see painted in the plaster of an ancient Roman villa, or in the background of a romantic painting. It's a peaceful scene that represents civilisation and domestication.

I would have it on my wall, except that the peace would be shattered every time my brain registered that the recess isn't in the middle of the frame. Things that should be central, and aren't, are like things that should be symmetrical but aren't. They spread discomfort and disharmony, just as much as if everyone were made to keep a Christmas-tree needle in each sock until the middle of May.

I've used some cropping to even out the amount of wall either side of the recess – the view is much more effective and we can concentrate on the contents of the recess without the loud-mouthed right wall shouting that it is bigger than the left wall.

I also toned down the highlights a little, as the brightness of the surrounding wall distracts us and makes it harder for us to see past the stones into the darker hole. I also took away some of the toning, as its saturation is a distraction. I like the colour, but it is a bit too strong.

So, well-spotted Cluny, but take care when framing to ensure your composition doesn't take us away from the subject when it should be leading us directly to it.

Damien Demolder is a photographer, journalist and photographic equipment expert, speaker, judge and educator. He has worked in the photographic publishing industry for 17 years, including 15 years at *Amateur Photographer*. He uses a wide range of equipment, from wooden plate cameras to the latest DSLRs, and is a great fan of all products that make good photography more accessible to more people

Accessories

Useful gadgets to enhance your photography, from phones to filters...

Artisan & Artist Red Label RDB-SD100 Shoulder Bag

● Around £136 ● www.redlabel-artisanandartist.com

Callum McInerney-Riley tries out a versatile messenger bag that's roomy enough for plenty of kit

ARTISAN & Artist Red Label produces camera bags (including shoulder bags, sling bags, backpacks and messenger bags), pouches and straps. The RDB-SD100 is a multi-purpose messenger designed to be used for both camera kit and as an everyday bag. This is reflected in its grey checked design, which certainly doesn't hint at the fact it holds a camera – so it's ideal if you're shooting in locations where security is an issue. There's 5mm-thick padding at the bottom of the bag, and inside there's a removable camera module with 10mm padding. This module has enough space for a medium-sized DSLR, and two large additional lenses. Alternatively I got a Fujifilm X-T1 and three lenses in there comfortably, and an Olympus OM-D E-M5 with lots of lenses wrapped up in lens wraps. A Canon EOS 5D Mark III was a bit of a squeeze but it did fit. I could also fit in a 15in laptop, which is useful.

The top flap of the bag folds over and fastens with a clip system. With a variety of different positions where these clips can go, you can adjust the size of the bag, and vary the amount of kit it holds, quickly and easily. For those who want quick access to their kit, there's a zip at the back that gives you direct access to the main compartment. There are large pockets on the sides of the bag and one on the front, which is ideal for chargers, cables, memory cards and other accessories.

Verdict

Although the materials used to construct the Artisan & Artist Red Label RDB-SD100 Shoulder Bag are of a high standard and appear very durable, the bag doesn't look as good as some at a similar price point. However, it offers a great level of padding, is comfortable and there's stacks of room for personal possessions alongside your camera kit.

ALL PRICES ARE APPROXIMATE STREET PRICES



Amateur Photographer Testbench Recommended ★★★★

Rain-resistant
The bag is designed so all pockets and pouches are totally covered by flaps, fastenings and weather-proofing to prevent rain getting in without the need for an additional cover.

Adjustable strap
The strap is made of a material similar to a car seatbelt and is fully adjustable.

Waterproof zips
Zips at the back and front of the bag are waterproof.

At a glance

- Grey checked fabric
- Fits a DSLR kit with two additional lenses
- Space for a 15in laptop

ALSO CONSIDER

Billingham Hadley Large
From £180, www.billingham.co.uk
The Hadley bags from Billingham are absolute classics and are available in different colours, finishes and sizes.



Domke F-6 Little Bit Smaller
From £109, www.domkebags.co.uk
Domke is renowned for its hard-wearing exploring bags. The F-6 has enough space for a DSLR kit, but not a laptop. It's made from durable, machine-washable canvas.



Ona Union Street
£245, www.onabags.com
Although more expensive, the Ona Union Street is a fantastic messenger bag. It's a multi-purpose bag that doesn't look like a typical camera bag. It holds a small DSLR kit and a 15in laptop.



Lee Filters Field Pouch

● £38 ● www.leefilters.com



The pouch has enough space for ten filters

FOR LANDSCAPE photographers working in the field, a high-quality filter pouch is a must-have accessory to protect expensive filters from accidental damage. The Lee Filters Field Pouch features an excellent cover to prevent inclement weather reaching your kit and is large enough to store long 100x150mm filters. Accessing the contents of the pouch is made easy thanks to zips located down either side. With the cover unfastened, you can quickly pull on these zips to create a broader span to the internal organiser. Each filter has its own compartment for ultimate protection and the extremely soft material offers reassurance that expensive glass filters will be safe inside.

There's enough space to store ten filters in total, but if you'd like to pack your filter holder and adapter rings in too, you'll need to sacrifice a few compartments. The pouch comes with a useful strap to sling it over your shoulder, and is also supplied with a tripod strap for the times when your camera is locked off and you'd like to access filters instantly. Users will find it's also possible to attach the pouch to your belt using the Velcro-fastened belt hook. Available in black, Lee Filters also produces the pouch in a sand/tan guise (see below) for those who'd prefer a slightly lighter colour. The build quality is excellent and it's the soft, padded internal compartments that impress most. Like most premium products, if you're prepared to spend a little more on this pouch you'll get a first-class product in return. It would make an excellent buy for any serious photographer working on location with 100x100mm or 100x150mm filters.

Michael Topham

Amateur Photographer Testbench GOLD ★★★★★



The pouch is also available in a sand/tan colour scheme

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The Tamron's wide-ranging zoom makes it an ideal travel lens

Tamron 14-150mm f/3.5-5.8 Di III

Andy Westlake tests the only third-party zoom for Micro Four Thirds cameras

Over the past few years, mirrorless compact system cameras have dramatically changed the landscape in the photographic equipment market. The likes of Fujifilm, Olympus, Panasonic and Sony have built up compelling alternatives for photographers tired of dealing with the size and weight of DSLRs, but unwilling to sacrifice image quality. However, the main third-party lens makers have been cautious about joining the party, perhaps waiting to see how the market shakes out. So while Panasonic and Olympus's Micro Four Thirds system was launched back in 2008, and both companies have built up significant lens ranges of their own, only a few autofocus lenses are available from other manufacturers.

Sigma and Zeiss have each made a handful of primes, and Tamron just a single zoom – the 14–150mm f/3.5–5.8 Di III – which is the lens on test here. With a 28–300mm equivalent zoom range, it's capable of covering a huge range of subjects.

In fact, this lens could lay claim to being one of the most overlooked offerings on the market. This is partly down to Tamron's decision not to include built-in image stabilisation, which immediately limits its usefulness for owners of most Panasonic cameras (Lumix DMC-GX7 and DMC-GX8 users excepted). Long-range superzooms such as this also tend to have a reputation with photographers for mediocre image quality, as the price you pay for their undoubted versatility. The other problem is that both Olympus and



Panasonic offer similar alternatives – the M. Zuiko Digital ED 14–150mm f/3.5–5.6 II and the Lumix G Vario 14–140mm f/3.5–5.6 OIS – which include weatherproofing and optical stabilisation respectively. So why even consider the Tamron?

The answer is, of course, price: selling



Marked pincushion distortion is visible across much of the zoom range – this was shot at 50mm

At around £280, it's significantly cheaper than the other two options. So for Micro Four Thirds users who want a flexible all-in-one travel lens and expect to use it in benign conditions, on paper it offers the best value. But does its relatively low cost mean it's an inferior option? Let's take a look.

Features

Comprising 17 elements in 13 groups and including one low-dispersion glass element, two anomalous dispersion glass elements, two glass-moulded aspherical elements and one hybrid aspherical element, the 14–150mm has the most complex optical design among Micro Four Thirds superzoom lenses. In principle, this should help reduce the optical aberrations to which lenses with such an ambitious zoom range tend to be prone.

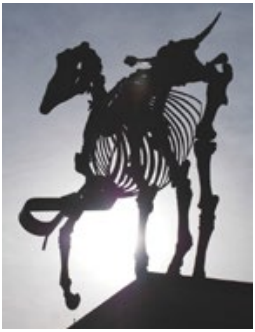
Despite all this glass, the 14–150mm is surprisingly compact, with a barrel diameter of 63.5mm and a length of 80.4mm from the mount to the front of the non-rotating 52mm filter thread. In context, it's smaller than Olympus's budget M.Zuiko Digital 40–150mm f/4–5.6 telezoom and barely larger than 18–55mm kit zooms for APS-C DSLRs. At 285g it's not especially heavy, either.

I'm pleased to say the lens is supplied with a bayonet-fitting petal-type plastic lens hood. Even better, it reverses neatly when not in use, fitting closely around the barrel. Packing up small is a real asset for this kind of travel lens.

Build and handling

When I first unboxed the 14–150mm, I was pleased to find that it doesn't feel cut-price at all. With a metal outer barrel and rear mount it comes across as gratifyingly well made – an impression reinforced by the smooth rotation of the zoom and focus rings. The switch for locking the zoom at its wideangle position is somewhat small and fiddly, but I found it to be superfluous anyway, as the lens isn't at all susceptible to zoom creep (extending or retracting under its own weight). When you turn on the camera, the lens makes a disconcerting rattling noise, which appears to be the aperture diaphragm going through a start-up cycle.

My sample had an attractive black paint finish with a contrasting silver ring next to the mount; a silver version is also available. The understated white barrel lettering makes the lens look classier than the gold markings used on older Tamron designs. One minor criticism is that both the front and rear lens caps are quite thick, while in contrast both Olympus and Panasonic use slender designs to maximise the size advantage of Micro Four Thirds.



Despite its complex optical construction, the lens deals reasonably well with shooting into the light

It's fair to say this lens is much better suited to some Micro Four Thirds cameras than others. Long lenses such as this tend to work better on cameras that have eye-level viewfinders, as this enables a more stable shooting stance. Its maximum aperture in the telephoto range is also decidedly slow (ranging from f/5.2 at 50mm to f/5.8 at 150mm), and this means that if you use it on a Panasonic body without image stabilisation, you'll need either lots of light or high ISO settings to achieve the high shutter speeds needed to avoid blur from handshake.

The upshot is that while the Tamron works particularly well on Olympus's OM-D cameras and the Panasonic Lumix DMC-GX7 and DMC-GX8, at the other end of the scale it's poorly suited for use on small bodies without viewfinders, such as Panasonic's GF series. Indeed, most Panasonic owners would be better served by the company's optically stabilised Lumix G Vario 14–140mm f/3.5–5.8 OIS instead. Meanwhile, Olympus owners who often shoot in wet conditions should take a look at the weather-sealed M.Zuiko Digital ED 14–150mm f/4–5.6 II.

Focusing

With a stepper motor employed to drive the focus group, the Tamron autofocuses silently and accurately. The slow maximum aperture at the telephoto end means it will often be rather slow when focusing in low light, but in daylight it's pretty snappy. Manual focusing works well, and the camera's focusing aids engage



The minimum focus distance of 50cm is good for close-ups

automatically when the focus ring is turned. With a minimum focus distance of 50cm, the lens is capable of impressive close-ups.

Performance

Conventional wisdom tends to state that superzoom lenses of this type are all about convenience and give inferior results to pairing standard and telephoto zooms. But the reality is a bit more complicated than that. In fact, the 14-150mm is pretty sharp towards the wide end of its range (although it's noticeably soft in the corners at 14mm), giving comparable or better results compared with the 14-42mm f/3.5-5.6 kit zooms supplied with many Micro Four Thirds cameras. However, as you zoom beyond 50mm it gets progressively weaker, and at the long end it's noticeably soft, rendering little in the way of really fine detail. But with careful shooting and processing it's still good enough for a nice 12x8in print.

One advantage of mirrorless systems is the ability to integrate software distortion correction into the lens design. This means that images contain none of the disturbing barrel distortion at wideangle that plagues superzoom lenses for DSLRs. Unusually for Micro Four Thirds, however, there is visible pincushion distortion at focal lengths longer than about 25mm (that is, 50mm equivalent), which is most pronounced around the 50mm setting. This is disappointing for JPEG users, although it's easily corrected when processing raw.

Most Micro Four Thirds cameras also have the ability to correct lateral chromatic aberration in software. Unfortunately, the Tamron 14-150mm doesn't play nicely in this regard, meaning that if you look at your images closely you'll see unsightly green and magenta fringing towards the corners of the frame in your JPEGs that's most pronounced towards the extremes of the zoom range. However, this can also be cleaned up easily enough if you shoot raw.

AP

Our verdict

TAMRON has a lot of experience in making superzoom lenses, and the 14-150mm f/3.5-5.8 Di III is a good example of the genre. It's compact, nicely made and autofocuses well. As usual for this kind of optic it's something of a compromise, with perfectly decent image quality at wider settings, but slightly less satisfactory results at the long end. Combined with its slow maximum aperture at telephoto, this means that if you expect to shoot distant subjects a lot – sports or wildlife, perhaps – a telezoom would be a better choice.

The lack of optical image stabilisation may keep costs down, but it means I wouldn't recommend it to most Panasonic users. Overall, though, there's no denying this lens's appeal as an all-in-one travel lens – the combination of long zoom range and decent close focusing gives huge compositional flexibility. Most importantly, it also offers decent results at an attractive price.



Data file

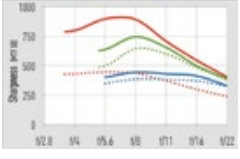
Price £280
Filter diameter 52mm
Lens elements 17
Groups 13
Diaphragm blades 7
Aperture f/3.5-5.8
Minimum focus 50cm
Length 80.4mm
Diameter 63.5mm
Weight 285g
Lens mount Micro Four Thirds

Amateur Photographer Testbench Recommended ★★★★

Tamron 14-150mm f/3.5-5.8 Di III

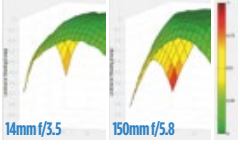
Resolution

Examining the MTF readings from our Applied Imaging tests, we see that the lens gives sharp results in the centre of the frame at 14mm, although the corners are weak. Zoom in to 50mm and sharpness is still very acceptable, becoming more even across the frame. However, at 150mm, images are noticeably softer. Best results are generally obtained at f/5.6-8.



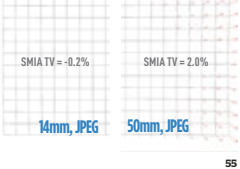
Shading

Not surprisingly for a complex lens in a compact package, the 14-150mm gives noticeable vignetting at the extremes of its zoom range. But it's not overly intrusive and in effect disappears when the aperture is closed down a stop. Overall, there's little to worry about.



Curvilinear distortion

Thanks to Micro Four Thirds' integration of software distortion correction, users should see perfectly corrected images at 14mm, with no visible barrel distortion. Elsewhere in the range, however, pincushion distortion is evident even in JPEG files, being strongest around the 50mm position.





Eyefi's Mobi Pro card can be used to transfer files wirelessly to computers or mobile devices

Eyefi Mobi Pro Wi-Fi SDHC card



Andy Westlake tries out Eyefi's most fully featured Wi-Fi SD card to date, along with its cloud storage features

Eyefi pioneered the concept of Wi-Fi-enabled SD cards, and has been making them for more than eight years now. However, with almost every new camera these days featuring built-in Wi-Fi, it might seem odd for the firm to be introducing a new-generation card. But think again – not only are there a huge number of non-Wi-Fi-enabled cameras in regular use, but Mobi Pro also offers features that simply aren't available using cameras' built-in Wi-Fi.

Most other set-ups are designed to allow you to pull selected pictures off your camera onto a smartphone or tablet for sharing with your friends and family. In contrast, Eyefi Mobi Pro is designed to automatically push everything you shoot to your smartphone, tablet or computer, and then upload it all to the Eyefi Cloud service, which gives unlimited cloud back-up for all your images. The card is also capable of connecting to a desktop computer using a home or studio Wi-Fi network. Together, this makes it the most interesting version yet for serious users.

Eyefi Mobi Pro is also quite configurable, so you can choose which features you'd like to use. It's possible to transfer only selected images to your phone, or just JPEGs rather than raw files. You can therefore use it to transfer raw files automatically to your computer as you shoot, or just copy the odd JPEG to your phone for sharing on social media.

Setting up

Open the box and you'll find the Wi-Fi SD card, a USB card reader and an activation code for a year's subscription to Eyefi Cloud. To make full use of the card's features you'll need to continue this subscription at an annual cost of £34.99. The card reader is a nice touch, but not essential: I found that Mobi Pro worked quite happily in most other card readers too.

Initial set-up is anything but intuitive, not helped by the complete lack of documentation in the package (instructions are available on the support section of Eyefi's website, and from the mobile app). You need to pair the card with your Mac or PC using the Eyefi Mobi Desktop app, and with each mobile device that you'll be connecting it to via the free Eyefi Mobi app. This is available for an admirably wide range of devices, not just iOS and Android, but also Windows phones and Amazon Fire tablets. The card will only connect to one device at a time, though, so can't transfer files to your phone and computer simultaneously. To configure options such as raw transfer, you need to connect the card directly to your computer.

In use

Once the card is set up, simply pop it in your camera and start shooting. If you've set the card to transfer files selectively, then marking an image as 'protected' will trigger transfer. One neat touch is that you can tell the Eyefi Mobi app to use your phone's GPS to track your location while you're out shooting, and then use this to geotag your images.

In terms of speed, I found the Mobi Pro performed very respectably. Testing it

alongside a number of similarly specified 16GB SDHC Class 10 cards in my Olympus OM-D E-M5, it sat towards the top of the pack for write speed. The Wi-Fi has some impact on the camera's battery life, of course, but it seems fairly minor. Overall, you don't pay a significant performance penalty while shooting compared to conventional cards.

Unsurprisingly, though, wireless file transfer isn't so fast. It took around ten seconds to copy each of my E-M5's fine-quality 6MP JPEGs (typically 8MB in size) to my smartphone or tablet, and 15-20 seconds for raw files (around 16MB). So if you shoot a series of pictures in quick succession, a backlog can rapidly build up. This means you can't necessarily rely on Mobi Pro for real-time feedback, so it's not a direct substitute for tethered studio shooting.

By default, while you're shooting, the card will automatically transfer every image you take to whichever device it's currently connected to. It's possible to set it up to copy JPEGs to your phone or tablet while you're out shooting, then copy the corresponding raw files to your computer when you get home for upload to Eyefi Cloud. However, there's no way of telling it not to transfer specific images, or prioritise your favourites, so you just have to let it do its own thing and wait patiently until it's finished.

Frustratingly, it's not possible to switch the card to selective transfer using the mobile app, so you can't change modes if you're out shooting and just want to copy one or two pictures to your phone. Oddly, you can't wirelessly transfer the same image from your camera more than once, to both your phone and tablet, for example, or to restore an image that you've accidentally deleted.

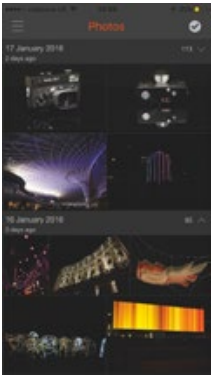
Eyefi Cloud

The next stage is syncing files to Eyefi Cloud, which the Mobi app will do fully automatically. If you want to preserve your data allowance, you can tell it to use a Wi-Fi connection only. In my experience the process was reliable, if not necessarily always very fast, although naturally this will be entirely dependent upon your network. Using the Mobi app you can also arrange your images into albums and share them. Hidden away in the Android version is an option to pause upload while you're sorting and editing albums; I found this really useful, and just wish it were more accessible.

Everything gets synced across your devices, so you can create an album on your phone and then view it on your tablet. Unlike with online photo album services such as Flickr, all your images are copied at reduced size to each device for offline viewing. You can also browse and edit your albums on any computer using Eyefi's web app (app.eyefi.com).

Eyefi Cloud acts as unlimited back-up for everything you shoot – not just JPEGs and movies, but raw too. This helps protect your precious photos from mishaps such as hard-drive failure. Of course, you could equally well use any other cloud storage service such as DropBox, but the advantage of Eyefi Cloud is its integration into the shooting process.

Your Eyefi Cloud account isn't just limited to shots recorded onto the Mobi Pro card, either. You can also automatically copy across images shot using your phone's camera, or upload any JPEG or raw file from your computer, meaning you can store JPEGs of your processed raw files. You only need one subscription no matter how many cards you're using, too. AP





The Eyefi Mobi mobile app allows photos to be viewed on your phone by date taken, or sorted into albums for sharing with your friends and family

Our verdict

EYEFI Mobi Pro is, in effect, three distinctly different but linked products: the Wi-Fi card itself, the Eyefi cloud service and the Mobi app that bridges them. I used the system with several cameras (Olympus XZ-2, OM-D E-M5 and OM-D E-M5 II; Panasonic Lumix DMC-GM1 and Canon EOS 50D using a CF adapter) and devices of various vintages (Apple iPhone 4S, Samsung Galaxy Tab tablet and my laptop running Windows 10) and found that it did pretty much what it promised seamlessly and reliably, if not always quickly. But if you just want to copy the odd file across to your phone for sharing, Transcend's Wi-Fi SD is a simpler and cheaper solution (£30 for a 16GB card).

Personally, I often found myself frustrated by Eyefi's forced automation of the whole process, and the lack of user intervention available. I'd prefer to have more control in the Mobi app over what files go where and when. Hopefully, Eyefi can implement this in future versions of the app.

Overall, though, Mobi Pro offers a unique combination of features, and implements them pretty well. It won't suit everyone's workflow, but if you can see it fitting into yours, it's an easy product to recommend.

Data file

Price £49.99 (16GB) or £65.99 (32GB)
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SDHC Class 10 card with built-in Wi-Fi
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1-year subscription to Eyefi Cloud storage service included
Eyefi Mobi app available for most devices
Desktop software available for Mac and Windows PC

Amateur Photographer Testbench Recommended ★★★★

Eyefi Mobi camera compatibility

WHILE Mobi Pro is compatible with most cameras that take SD cards, it's best to check on the Eyefi website that it will work with your own (www.eyefi.com/cameras). Some models offer full support for Eyefi, including optimised power management and the ability to turn Wi-Fi on and off from the camera's menus. Meanwhile, with others it's necessary to tune power settings yourself, to ensure your camera doesn't power itself off in the middle of a Wi-Fi transfer.

Mobi Pro cards will also work in some cameras that use CompactFlash cards via an Eyefi-certified adapter, which costs £15.99. This has the thicker CF Type II form factor, so it won't fit every model, but again you can check on the Eyefi website.



Eyefi's CompactFlash adapter allows use in a wide range of cameras



Tripod tricks

Making videos can be expensive, but you can save a lot of money by using these simple tripod tricks to replicate shots that would normally need a lot more equipment

When you switch your camera to video mode for the first time, it can be difficult to know exactly how to get the sorts of shots we're used to seeing on television and in films. We're not talking about expensive aerial shots from helicopters, or things that are filmed at thousands of frames a second, just those simple, light movements that can add character and emotion to an otherwise simple scene.

There's an almost unlimited supply of accessories you can buy that will help you move your camera, but you can forget all those. When you're starting out, a simple tripod – the very same one you use for your photography – is all you need. On these pages, we'll explain how to perform four very simple-to-use tripod tricks to get a much higher production value than you would probably ever expect. AP

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The **crane shot**

IN A fall-down crane shot the camera moves in a downward arc towards the subject, while in a rise-up crane shot the camera does the opposite. It's called a crane shot because ideally you'd be using just that, but it's easy enough to recreate with your tripod. The shot can be used to draw attention to, or away from, your subject, and by getting in close it can create dramatic tension. Because of this, the crane shot should be used sparingly. Here's how to do it.

Collapse the front leg of the tripod, and extend the other two, with the feet of the tripod pressed against the end of your own feet. Hold onto the handle of the pan-and-tilt arm if you have a pan-tilt head. If you don't, carefully hold and lower the camera. The tripod legs will pivot at the point the legs meet your feet, and you can lower or raise the camera in a smooth arc. Before you hit record, put the camera in its final resting position and focus on the subject, so that as you perform the crane shot the subject will come in to focus and stay there once you have come to a stop.

The **stabilised shot**

THERE are many tools available to stabilise your camera, and it can be difficult to know what to buy. Some are for specific activities, so something that will hold the camera steady for a still handheld shot may not work when you are walking. However, if you don't have a stabilisation device, you can use your tripod.

Collapse all the tripod legs in and fold them closed. Hold the tripod by the centre column, and panning handle if available, and the camera should be more stable than if handholding.

If you are performing a tracking shot you can also spread the tripod legs out. Each of the legs then acts as a counterweight that will balance any movements. The further the legs are out, the better the balance will be but the more unwieldy it is to manoeuvre. You will see some movement as you walk along with the tripod stabiliser, but it will smooth out any sharp bumps and jolts, and minimise swings. With a touch of post-production stabilisation in editing software, it can be very effective.

The low-angle **tracking shot**

TRACKING shots follow a subject at a very close range as they move around the frame. Often you'll want to get the camera down very low for a shot of the subject's feet as they walk around a scene. Low-angle moving shots can be tricky. A small roller-skate-style dolly can allow you to mount a camera and roll it along the floor. Some even come with long arms so you can push the roller-skate dolly without having to bend over. However, you can use your tripod just as effectively.

Mount the camera on the tripod very securely. Then simply hit record and hold it upside down so that the camera is almost touching the ground. You can now move the camera around easily at this low angle. 'But all the footage will be upside down!' we hear you cry, and, yes, you are correct. When you open the file in your image-editing software, simply rotate by 180° so it's the right way up and you'll have a perfect low-angle tracking shot.

The **slider shot**

A SLIDER is one of the most useful tools a videographer can have. A slight side-to-side movement can add a bit of character to what would be a rather static shot. However, a good slider can cost hundreds of pounds, and it's yet another bit of kit to have to carry around, as if you didn't have enough already. Instead, you can use a tripod.

Mount the camera on a tripod as usual, collapse all the legs and fold them in. Now take the tripod securely in both hands and keep it steady. Shift your body weight steadily from one leg to the other while keeping the camera as close to the same height as possible and you have a simple slider shot. If you want to perform an extremely wide shot, when you shift your weight from side to side bend your knees as if you are lunging. Just be sure to keep the camera at the same height

If you do have movement in your footage, you can always steady it using a stabilisation tool in your video-editing software.

To see these shots in action, go to **www.thevideomode.com/equipment/tripod-tricks-you-can-use-for-video-1709**



For more video techniques, news and reviews visit **www.thevideomode.com**

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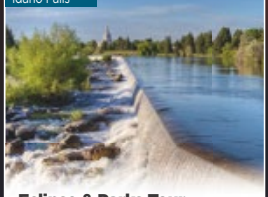
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● EXPERT ADVICE ● TIPS ● TRICKS ● HACKS ● KNOW-HOW

Tomorrow's camera today

Q I'm looking to buy a new camera, in particular a digital SLR. A digital shutter on a mirrorless camera may sometimes record many frames per second. But it's got me thinking that surely, one day, advances in LCD technology and sensor/processing performance would mean recording huge numbers of frames in one second.

What would the 'SLR of tomorrow' look like if it took 4,000 frames in good light in one second? Wouldn't that make today's equipment seem a bit too pricey for what it currently does? **Thomas Latcham**

A This idea certainly sounds like it would be exciting technology that would make today's cameras look obsolete. But perhaps we should step back a moment to think about one key practical detail. How would you sort through those 4,000 frames from every second of shooting to pick out the decisive moment?

Of course, we now have cameras that purport to do this sort of thing, and provide pointers to the answer. Nikon's 1-system cameras can shoot at 60fps in electronic shutter mode, and will attempt to pick out the best shots from a burst. But would you really want to let the camera make that decision?

Alternatively we can consider Panasonic's 4K Photo mode, that in effect shoots a 30fps burst and records it as a video file to make the most efficient use of storage space. The camera then displays the images and allows the user to select and save their favourite. But in many cases, even at 'just' 30fps there are often only minimal changes between frames; few subjects benefit from being shot at this speed, let alone 4,000fps.

I'm not dismissing the usefulness of high-speed shooting, but it's important to keep it in context. It's a tool that's handy to have, but it's a pretty specialised one.

As for your last point, I think it's fair to say that advances in technology always make old cameras look expensive. For example, the Canon EOS 5D that I bought almost ten years ago is utterly outclassed by modern cameras of a similar price in terms of resolution, autofocus, high ISO noise and almost any measure you can think of. But of course, it doesn't change the fact that it was a good camera for its time and, as far as I'm concerned, was worth every penny of the £1,800 I paid for it. **Andy Westlake**



Chris Jack used his current camera, a Sony HX50, at a recent 2Cellos gig

© CHRIS JACK

Event shooting

Q I'm planning to buy a new camera for shooting at gigs. Venues such as the O2 have strict rules about what sort of cameras you can bring in. The Sony Cyber-shot DSC-HX50 I currently use has a 30x zoom, but shows its limitations with a maximum ISO of 800. I have to throw a lot of photos away for technical reasons. A zoom of 30x is very useful at getting reasonably close shots in large venues, but a large ISO would reduce the number of out-takes.

So, I'm considering either the Panasonic Lumix DMC-TZ100 (with a 10x zoom and a 1in sensor) or the Lumix DMC-TZ80 (with a 30x zoom but a smaller sensor). Do you have any thoughts or recommendations? **Chris Jack**

A Having attended plenty of sporting and musical events, I've found that venues generally don't like any camera that looks 'professional'. In practice, this tends to mean they'll frown on anything with an SLR-like design. But 'travel zoom' cameras like the TZ100 and TZ80 you're considering will usually be allowed in.

Between the two, I think the TZ100 would probably be the better choice. Indeed, the TZ80 isn't likely to give that much of an advantage over your HX50 – it's more up to date and should give slightly better results at high ISOs, but the difference won't be huge, as both cameras use small 1/2.3in-type sensors. Indeed, its main advantage is the ability to shoot in raw, so you can post-process your shots after the event.

However, the TZ100's larger 1in sensor will produce much better image quality at any given ISO. But the trade-off is that the lens is rather shorter than those on the TZ80 or your HX50, at 250mm equivalent rather than 720mm, and this will limit your ability to zoom in for close-up shots. To an extent, this will be mitigated by the fact that the improved image quality will give you greater scope for cropping into your images. If you crop in to give a 720mm equivalent view, you'll end up with images around 2.4MP in size, which is fine for web use or small prints up to about 6x4in.

Both the cameras you're considering are brand-new models, and I'd recommend waiting for reviews before buying, just in case either has an unexpected problem (for instance, good autofocus and metering are important for music photography). We expect to be reviewing both in early February. **Andy Westlake**

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My life in cameras

AP Technical writer Callum McInerney-Riley recalls the cameras that have shaped his photographic life



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Callum McInerney-Riley



After studying photography at Harlow College in Essex, Callum started work as a freelance photographer in London. He went on to set up a studio in his home town and specialised in advertising, product photography and portraits. Callum joined the AP team in early 2013 as a technical writer, taking over many of the accessory reviews and also reviewing cameras.

2000 Kodak 27-shot disposable

I think I used these types of cameras for about four years. I'm a keen angler and needed a way to record my trips and catches. I was too poor to afford a proper camera, and I pretty much spent all my pocket money on buying these and developing the images. In retrospect, I wasn't saving much because each camera cost £5 and then it was another £5 to develop the photographs.



2004 Samsung Digimax A6

This was my first proper camera. I actually had to beg my mum to buy it for my birthday. It wasn't a particularly great camera but it was 6MP, back in the days when megapixels really mattered. Others at around the same budget were only 4MP. It was great for what I wanted but ate through AA batteries. I had to carry eight rechargeables around with me. It was revolutionary to me because I could take hundreds of pictures on my fishing trips and then delete them.



2008 Canon EOS 400D

I bought this camera as a student on a media course. I'd wanted a DSLR for a while and this one just about fell into my budget. It was a fairly standard camera, but it really helped elevate my photography to another level. Using the camera I was able to take on the occasional freelance job and it meant that I could eventually gravitate towards a more professional model.



2010 Canon EOS 5D Mark II

It was around this time that I started taking on a lot of freelance photography work. The big sell for me was that this was a full-frame camera and it allowed me to shoot with shallow depth of field. I was finally able to shoot professionally and, best of all, was able to build around the camera with things like flash and a studio kit. This quickly became my workhorse camera and remains so to this day.



2014 Fujifilm X-T1

While I still use the Canon EOS 5D Mark III, the Fujifilm X-T1 is perhaps the camera I use the most. It's a camera that I really enjoy. The buttons are similar to those found on old film cameras, and even at high ISOs the images look filmic. Best of all, you don't feel like you need a degree in computer programming to use the menu system. I've used this for a few pro shoots, but mostly I use it for pleasure.



2000 2004 2008 2010 2014



BLAST FROM THE PAST

Miranda F

Ivor Matanle on the completely mechanical SLR from the 1960s

LAUNCHED: 1963

PRICE: £79 19s 8d with 50mm f/1.9

GUIDE PRICE TODAY: £73-£100 with f/1.9 lens

THE ALL-METAL Miranda F is a completely mechanical 35mm SLR with a plain pentaprism viewfinder that can be interchanged with a waist-level finder, or with a TTL metered prism supplied for the Miranda FvT. Unusually, the Miranda F has both bayonet and 44mm screw-lens mounts, and the Miranda Camera Company supplied accessories, such as bellows and extension tubes, to fit the screw mount. Bayonet-mount lenses were available, but only the 28mm, 35mm and 135mm were available with automatic diaphragms, under the name Miranda Auto. The rest, up to 800mm f/8, had preset diaphragms, under the name Miranda Soligor.

The 5cm f/1.9 Miranda Auto lens (bayonet mount) delivered high resolution with lower contrast than most Japanese lenses of the time. The fabric focal-plane shutter, with speeds from 1-1/1,000sec, was reliable and less noisy than East German shutters of the period.

What's good: Excellent quality focusing screen and lenses. Miranda brought together, in one amateur package, features that made professional SLRs, such as the Nikon F, so desirable to impecunious amateurs during the mid-1960s.

What's bad: Perhaps only that the Miranda Camera Company went out of business too soon.

ROUND THREE NOW OPEN!



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The competition is split into three rounds, each with its unique theme: Nature, Time and Love. To enter, submit a video no more than five minutes in length, of HD quality. You can shoot on any camera you'd like, and the content and editing are up to your imagination – so long as it fits the round's particular theme.

Visit www.thevideomode.com to view the top videos, as well as the scores and a leaderboard for the overall competition. The winner will be the person with the most points after three rounds, who will win the overall prize as well as title of Amateur Filmmaker of the Year.

Round Three: Love

We want to see how you convey your love for someone or something through film in a creative way for this round. Try using techniques such as 'lens whacking' or 'light leaks' to add that soft feel to your footage. For examples, go to www.thevideomode.com/examples.

Rounds and dates

Below is a list of the competition rounds, their themes and the dates you need to know. To view the results, visit www.thevideomode.com. When planning your entry, take into consideration the criteria of fulfilling the brief, creativity and technical excellence on which you'll be judged.

Theme	Opens	Closes
Round One: Nature	1 Aug	30 Sep
Round Two: Time	1 Oct	31 Dec
Round Three: Love	**1 Jan**	**28 Feb**

The overall winner will be announced in April 2016

Prizes

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Round Three

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Overall prize

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Professor Newman on...

Suitable materials

Nikon has developed a mirror box from engineering plastic for its 'second-tier' D810 model

Practically every DSLR that you can buy is based on the same basic structure. The central and most critical part is the mirror box. The reason that it is critical is that this part defines the optical alignment of the camera.

The lens fits on the front and the sensor fits on the back, and it is the role of the mirror box to keep them precisely the right distance apart (to ensure sharp focus) and exactly plane parallel (to ensure that sharp focus extends right across the frame). In addition, the mirror box must hold the mirror-flipping mechanism and resist vibration and movement as those parts move to do their job. As camera resolutions have increased, it's become clear that the camera shake caused by these factors is significant.

In the majority of cameras the mirror box is constructed from a moulding of 'engineering plastic'. The major advantage of this material is that it can be moulded in complex forms that can significantly simplify the number of parts required and reduce the amount of skilled effort needed to assemble the camera. Since cameras are still assembled largely by hand, this can be a significant saving in price. This advantage is used for all but the very top-end cameras, the only exceptions having been the Canon EOS-1D series, the Nikon single-digit series (D1-D4) and the Nikon second tier models, the D200, D300, D700 and D800, which have all had cast magnesium mirror boxes.

There is an open question as to how much advantage the metal box confers, since you see few complaints with respect to Canon's second tier, the 5D and 7D series, which have a plastic mirror box.

'The latest Nikon second-tier model, the D810, has a plastic mirror box, unlike its predecessor'



Most DSLRs use a plastic mirror box, like this one from the Nikon D750

R&D investment

Now seems to be a good time to think about the question again, since it has become apparent that the latest Nikon second-tier model, the D810, has a plastic mirror box, unlike its predecessor. It's unlikely that Nikon has made this change to reduce manufacturing costs – it would have required a significant change in the tooling which itself must have required R&D investment. Instead, the change could derive from a desire to improve the product.

The respected Nikon specialist Thom Hogan revealed a couple of years ago that there was a significant occurrence of a problem in the original D800 – if the camera were dropped it could suffer a brittle fracture in the mirror box, which left the sensor misaligned even though there was no exterior sign of damage. It is possible that the change to the more resilient carbon-filled polymer is a response to this problem. A second design goal for the D810 was to produce less sensor vibration during exposure, to maximise use of the camera's 36 megapixels. One measure taken was the fitting of a new lower-vibration shutter. The additional acoustic damping of the polymer mirror box will also have helped.

Bob Newman is currently Professor of Computer Science at the University of Wolverhampton. He has been working with the design and development of high-technology equipment for 35 years and two of his products have won innovation awards. Bob is also a camera nut and a keen amateur photographer

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Olympus Manual

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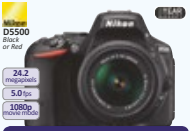
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CUSTOMER REVIEW: D7100 Body
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CUSTOMER REVIEW: D4s Body
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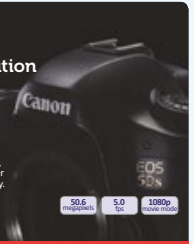
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CUSTOMER REVIEW: EOS 70D + 18-135mm IS STM

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5D Mark III Body	£2178

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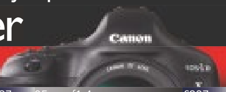
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Canon EF 70-300 f4.5-5.6 DO IS USM	£449
Canon EF 8-15mm f4L Fisheye	£695
Canon EF TS-E 24mm	£595
Sigma 170-500mm Canon	£249
Canon EF 70-300mm IS USM	£225
Canon EF 1.4X Extender II	£175
Canon EF 2x Extender III	£199
Sigma 24-70mm f2.8 (CANON)	£195
Zeiss ZE 15mm f2.8 Canon Fit + UV	£1,595
Zeiss 21mm f2.8 Distagon ZE - Canon	£995
Zeiss 50mm f1.4 Planar ZE- Canon	£395
Nikon D800	£1,195
Nikon D2Xs	£495
Nikon D300 + MB-D10	£295
Nikon D300 + 18-55mm	£295
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Nikon AF-S 70-200mm f2.8 G VR White	£795
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Nikon AF-S 85mm f1.4 G	£895
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Nikon AF 80-400mm f4.5-5.6 D VR	£595
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Nikon AF-S 85mm f1.8G	£225
Nikon TC-17E II	£195
Nikon AF-D 18-35mm f3.5-4.5D	£195
Sigam EX 10-20mm f4-5.6 DC Nikon	£249
Nikon AF-S DX 35mm f1.8 G	£99
Nikon AF-S 18-55 f3.5-5.6 DX VR II	£95
Nikon AF-S 55-200mm F4-5.6 DX	£69
Canon EF 24-70mm f2.8L	£495
Bronica PE 125-250mm f5.6	£150
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50mm f/1.2 L USM	£995.00
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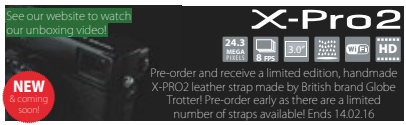
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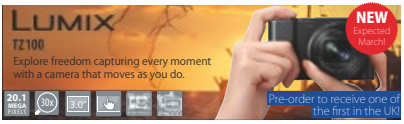
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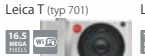
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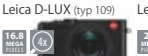


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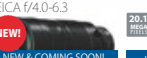


24x

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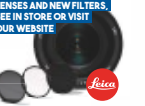
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Pancake - Olympus	£699	£389
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Q7 + 5-15mm - Black - Pentax	£449	£250
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Sigma Canon EOS	£799	£499
8-16mm F4.5-5.6 DC HSM		
Sigma Nikon AF	£799	£529
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Sigma Pentax AF	£549	£289
10-20mm F4-5.6 EX DC HSM		
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Tokina Nikon AF	£669	£319
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Sigma Pentax AF	£549	£250
18-250mm F3.5-6.3 DC Macro OS HSM		
Sigma Canon EOS	£549	£249
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18mm F3.8 Asph M Black - Leica	£2,350	£1,849
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Samyang Canon EOS	£549	£535
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32mm F1.8 Touit X - Zeiss	£699	£449
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Samyang Canon EOS	£436	£359
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50mm F2 ZF Macro - Zeiss Nikon	£999	£599
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8x25 BF - Minox	£129	£79
8x25 BG PC Compact - RSPB	£199	£149
8x25 macroscope - Minox	£149	£99
8L 8x33 HD - Minox	£449	£309
8x32 AS XB - Intro	£39	£6
Skyhawk Pro 8x32 - Steiner	£416	£250
8x36 Monarch DCF WP - Nikon	£299	£149
8x42 BF - Minox	£149	£129
8x42 BG PC - RSPB	£449	£179
8x42 BRF Geovid HD - M- Leica	£1,899	£1,349
8x42 ED- Viking	£299	£199
8X44 HD - Minox	£449	£349
8x42 8x56 B - Swarovski	£1,545	£950
10x25 Traveller - Viking	£49	£29
10x36 DCF Monarch DCF WP- Nikon	£299	£158
10x42 BF - Minox	£159	£119
Nanolux 10x42 - Viking	£199	£99
HG 10x43 BR Asph - Minox	£799	£639
10X44 BL HD - Minox	£449	£349
10x50 Safari Ultrasharp - Steiner	£399	£199
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12x50 Ultralit - Braun	£59	£28
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65 T* FL Victory + 15-45x - Zeiss	£1,935	£1,550
APO Televid 65 Angled + 25-50x Asph Leica	£2,340	£2,089
Televid 77 Straight + 40x Eyepiece Leica	£999	£889
FEGS Scope + 20-50x Zoom - Kenko	£299	£79
Lens2Scope Attachment Angled- Kenko	£219	£49
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DTC400 Slim Trail Cam - Minox	£199	£139
TP-88EC1 Prism Unit (Scope Use) Clearance - Kowa	£629	£199
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37366 P/P2 Lens Adapter	£149	£29
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85mm F2.8 Hektor P2	£149	£24
90mm F2.5 Colorplan Pro (37354)	£159	£59
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200mm F3.4 Elmaron Pro (37358)	£360	£119
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Remote Control MR-A (RS80N3)- JJC	£19	£12
Timer Remote Control C1 Fits- RS60N3 - Have	£79	£25
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240 x 200 Electric Wall Projector Screen Braun	£499	£250
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ALM13004 Mini HDMI Cable - Nikon	£29	£15
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C40D Grip (20D / 30D / 40D) - Ansmann	£89	£39
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Battery 1 Compact - Quantum	£199	£135
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C3204 4 Section Carbon Monopod - Kood	£79	£55
Sherpa 630+ Legs + Giottos MH652 B&S Velbon	£298	£149
Sherpa 630+ legs + Slik 504QFII Head Velbon	£279	£129
Sherpa 630+ Legs + Slik SBH-200DS B&S Velbon	£268	£139
Sherpa 630+ Legs - Velbon	£179	£95
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Ultra Lux L with PHD-41Q Panhead Velbon	£84	£62
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26 AF-1 Digital - Olympus M4/3rds Metz	£99	£85
28 AF4M Minolta - Metz	£79	£19
52 AF-1 Flashgun - Canon - Metz	£219	£175
52 AF-1 Flashgun - Sony - Metz	£219	£169
AF260Sa Flash - Pentax	£49	£9
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Di466 Flashgun Black - Olympus - Nissin	£99	£64
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Di700 Flashgun - Canon - Nissin	£199	£136
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MRF-14S Ringflash - Marumi	£129	£79
PZ4000AF CANON EOS - Sunpak	£129	£29
Plus II Transceiver - PocketWizard	£139	£75
Plus III Transciever Single- Pocket Wizard	£179	£129
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Flash Battery Pack MK-SF SB900 - Meike	£59	£19
Flash Battery Pack SF-17 SB800- Yongnuo	£59	£19
Flash Cable CKE	£49	£14
Off Camera Flash Cord (SC29)- Meike	£34	£14
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55mm Skylight 1B- Kood	£10	£4
55mm UV digital mc - Giottos	£24	£4
58mm UV Pro-1 Digital- Hoya	£99	£16
62mm Skylight MC Digital- Kenko	£26	£7
62mm UV Kood	£24	£5
72mm HD Digital UV - Hoya	£59	£29
72mm Protection Pro-1 Digital- Hoya	£69	£23
E46 UV/IR - Black - Leica	£89	£70
E49 UV/IR - Black - Leica	£89	£69
E55 UV/IR - Black- Leica	£109	£89
E67 Circular Polariser- Leica	£299	£219
E69 ND x8 filter- Leica	£99	£25
Elpro S 180 - Leica	£800	£699
ND4x Filter for 500mm F8 R Telyt - Leica	£89	£9
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Apex PV AW Black - Lowepro	£24	£3
Cirrus TLZ 5 Black - Lowepro	£24	£7
Clips 110 Black - Lowepro	£24	£6
Clips 110 Blue- Lowepro	£24	£6
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CS-13FBC Black Leather Case - Olympus	£59	£19
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Elements Extension Sleeve E704 - Kata	£79	£39
Explorer 400 - Black - Tamrac	£74	£35
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54" Halo Mono Round - Westcott	£199	£119
Apollo 180 / 180 Kit - Pro Line	£364	£229
Apollo 300 Creative kit - Pro Line	£499	£399
Mini Apollo Kit - Westcott	£69	£55
Photo Basics Stroblite Plus - Westcott	£699	£450
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Extreme Fleece 2 (XXL) - Stealthgear	£69	£50
Extreme Smock F/Green (M) - Stealthgear	£199	£150
Extreme Trouser M2 F/Green (M32) Stealthgear	£89	£69
Extreme Trouser M2 F/Green (XL34) Stealthgear	£89	£65
Extreme Trouser M2 F/Green (XXL32) Stealthgear	£89	£65
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Film Drop AW Pouch - Lowepro	£17	£3
Explorer 400 - Black- Tamrac	£75	£35
GC-1R Leather Case (Red) GR Digital I / II - Ricoh	£29	£10
GC-2 Case (GR D II) - Ricoh	£29	£10
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Millipod Micro Tripod - Always-on	£14	£3
Nova Micro AW - Forest Green - Lowepro	£38	£9
Omni Sport Extreme Shell 1400 - Lowepro	£129	£35
Rezo 10 Case Leaf Green - Lowepro	£14	£3
Rezo 15 Case Burnt Orange - Lowepro	£15	£3
Rezo 20 Case Leaf Green - Lowepro	£16	£3
Rezo 30 Case Red - Lowepro	£19	£3
Pro 7 Ultra - Tamrac	£135	£49
SC60 Leather Case (R4/5) - Ricoh	£29	£10
Sony Alpha 100 Camera Armor	£24	£1
Tasca 10 Pink Mobile Pocket - Lowepro	£14	£2
Trekker DayPack II - Lowepro	£59	£19
XL Compact Wrap Up - Black - Always-on	£19	£3
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KFM 1100 Light Meter- Kenko	£313	£199
L308s LTD Blue - Sekonic	£249	£139
L308s LTD Green- Sekonic	£249	£139
L478D LiteMaster Pro - Sekonic	£399	£269
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Mamiya - Canon EOS Lens Mount Adapter - JJC	£79	£39
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We carry one of the largest ranges of printer ink cartridges in the UK, with cartridges in stock for practically every inkjet printer. We always stock **Original** cartridges, which are made by your printer manufacturer, and in many cases we also offer **Compatible** cartridges, which are usually made by a UK company called **Jet Tec**. Using **Jet Tec Compatibles** is a way of saving money, without compromising on the quality of your prints.

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Originals:
Set of 12 £229.99
Colours 36ml each £19.99

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Originals:
Set of 10 £94.99
Colours 14ml each £9.99

CLi42 Pixma Pro 100
Originals:
Set of 8 £74.99
Colours 13ml each £9.99
Compatibles:
Set of 8 £27.99
Colours 14ml each £3.99

CLi8 Pixma Pro 9000
Originals:
Set of 8 £74.99
Colours 14ml each £9.99
Compatibles:
Set of 8 £27.99
Colours 14ml each £3.99

PGi9 Pixma Pro 9500
Originals:
Set of 10 £84.99
Colours 14ml each £8.99
Compatibles:
Set of 10 £44.99
Colours 14ml each £4.99

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PGi525 Black 19ml £9.99
CLi526 Colours 9ml £8.99
PGi550/CLi551 Set of 5 £37.99
PGi550 Black 15ml £9.99
CLi551 Colours 7ml £7.99
PGi550/CLi551XL Set of 5 £54.99
PGi550XL Black 22ml £11.99
CLi551XL Colours 11ml £10.99
PG540 Black 8ml £10.99
PG540XL Black 21ml £15.99
CL541 Colour 8ml £13.99
CL541XL Colour 15ml £15.99
PG545XL Black 15ml £13.99
CL546XL Colour 13ml £15.99
Compatibles:
PGi5 Black 27ml £4.99
CLi8 Colours 13ml £3.99
PGi5/CLi8 Set of 5 £19.99
PGi520 Black 19ml £4.99
CLi521 Colours 9ml £3.99
PGi520/CLi521 Set of 5 £19.99
PGi525 Black 19ml £4.99
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PGi525/CLi526 Set of 5 £19.99
PGi550XL Black 25ml £4.99
CLi551XL Colours 12ml £3.99
PGi550/CLi551XL Set of 5 £19.99
BCi6 Colours 15ml £2.99
PG40 Black 28ml £12.99
CL41 Colour 24ml £16.99
PG50 Black 28ml £12.99
CL51 Colour 24ml £14.99
PG510 Black 11ml £13.99
CL511 Colour 11ml £15.99
PG512 Black 18ml £13.99
CL513 Colour 15ml £15.99
PG540XL Black 21ml £13.99
CL541XL Colour 15ml £14.99
PG545XL Black 15ml £11.99
PG546XL Black 21ml £12.99

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No.16 Colours 3.1ml each £5.99
No.16XL Set of 4 £42.99
No.16XL Black 12.9ml £14.99
No.16XL Colours 6.5ml each £11.99
Compatibles:
No.16 Set of 4 £14.99
No.16 Black 12ml £3.99
No.16 Colours 12ml each £3.99

No.18 Daisy Inks
Originals:
No.18 Set of 4 £22.99
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No.18 Colours 3.3ml each £5.99
No.18XL Set of 4 £42.99
No.18XL Black 11.5ml £14.99
No.18XL Colours 6.6ml each £11.99
Compatibles:
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No.18 Black 12ml £3.99
No.18 Colours 12ml each £3.99

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Originals:
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No.24 Colours 4.6ml each £7.99
No.24XL Set of 6 £64.99
No.24XL Colours 8.7ml each £11.99
Compatibles:
No.24 Set of 6 £22.99
No.24 Black 7ml £3.99
No.24 Colours 7ml each £3.99

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T0481-T0486 Seahorse Inks
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T0541-T0549 Frog Inks
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T0591-T0599 Lily Inks
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More Epson inks >>>

Albums & Frames

We now stock a comprehensive range of frames, mounts, albums and accessories. The full range can be viewed on our website, with detailed close-up images of each product to help you choose the perfect way to display your printed photographs. Below is just a tiny sample of what we offer:



Grace Albums
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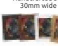


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Distressed wood shabby chic effect.
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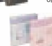




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Emilia 8x6 two colours £6.99
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Emilia 12x8 two colours £8.99
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Rio 8x6 four colours £7.99
Rio 10x8 four colours £8.99
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Compatibles:
Set of 4 £14.99
Black 7.4ml £4.99
Colours 5.5ml each £3.99

T0791-T0796 Owl Inks
Originals:
Set of 6 £72.99
Colours 11.1ml each £12.99
Compatibles:
Set of 6 £19.99
Colours 11.1ml each £3.99

T0801-T0806 Hummingbird Inks
Originals:
Set of 6 £49.99
Colours 7.4ml each £8.99
Compatibles:
Set of 6 £19.99
Colours 7.4ml each £3.99

T0871-T0879 Flamingo Inks
Originals:
Set of 8 £66.99
Colours 11.4ml each £9.99
Compatibles:
Set of 8 £27.99
Colours 11.4ml each £3.99

T0961-T0969 Husky Inks
Originals:
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Colours 11.4ml each £8.99
Compatibles:
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Colours 11.4ml each £3.99

T1571-T1579 Turtle Inks
Originals:
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Colours 25.9ml each £18.99

T7601-T7609 Killer Whale
Originals:
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Colours 25.9ml each £18.99

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No.300 Colour 4ml £12.99
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No.301 Colour 3ml £11.99
No.301XL Black 8ml £18.99
No.301XL Colour 6ml £18.99
No.350 Black 4.5ml £11.99
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No.932XL SET OF 4 £43.99
No.950XL SET OF 4 £69.99
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No.57 Colour 24ml £12.99
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No.300XL Colour 18ml £16.99
No.301XL Black 15ml £14.99
No.301XL Colour 18ml £16.99
No.337 Black 21ml £10.99
No.338 Black 21ml £10.99
No.339 Black 34ml £12.99
No.343 Colour 21ml £12.99
No.344 Colour 21ml £14.99
No.348 Photo 21ml £12.99
No.350XL Black 30ml £14.99
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No.363 Black 20ml £6.99
No.363 Colours 6ml each £4.99
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A4 100 sheets £39.99
A4 250 sheets £84.99
A3 25 sheets £25.99
A3+ 25 sheets £35.99
17" Roll 30 metres £69.99
24" Roll 30 metres £96.99

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7x5 100 sheets £17.99
A4 25 sheets £12.99
A4 100 sheets £39.99
A3 25 sheets £25.99
A3+ 25 sheets £35.99

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A3+ 50 sheets £34.99

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A3+ 50 sheets £44.99

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A3+ 50 sheets £89.99

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A3+ 25 sheets £42.99

Fotospeed

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7x5 100 sheets £16.99
A4 50 sheets £17.99
A3 50 sheets £34.99
A3+ 25 sheets £25.99
Panoramic 25 sheets £26.99
17" Roll 30 metres £68.99
24" Roll 30 metres £85.99

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17" Roll 30 metres £69.99
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A3 50 sheets £35.99
A3+ 50 sheets £47.99
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A3 50 sheets £26.99
A3+ 50 sheets £35.99

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Canon

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A3+ 10 sheets £24.99

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A4 50 sheets £18.99
A3 50 sheets £35.99
A3+ 25 sheets £28.99
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A4 25 sheets £12.99
A3 25 sheets £22.99
A3+ 25 sheets £30.99
13" Roll 10 metres £21.99
17" Roll 30 metres £68.99
24" Roll 30 metres £92.99

Titanium Lustre 280gsm:
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A3 25 sheets £44.99
A3+ 25 sheets £62.99

Oyster 271gsm:
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7x5 100 sheets £18.99
A4 50 sheets £18.99
A3 25 sheets £22.99
A3+ 25 sheets £28.99
13" Roll 10 metres £26.99
17" Roll 30 metres £64.99
24" Roll 30 metres £89.99

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7x5 100 sheets £18.99
A4 50 sheets £18.99
A3 25 sheets £22.99
A3+ 25 sheets £28.99
13" Roll 10 metres £26.99
17" Roll 30 metres £64.99
24" Roll 30 metres £89.99

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A4 50 sheets £13.99
A3 25 sheets £17.99
A3+ 25 sheets £22.99
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17" Roll 30 metres £42.99
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A3 75 sheets £22.99
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A3 20 sheets £29.99
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7x5 50 sheets £12.99
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A4 20 sheets £14.99
A3 20 sheets £29.99
A3+ 20 sheets OFFER £24.99

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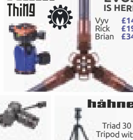
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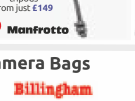
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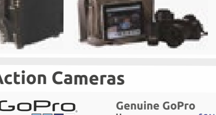


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Final Analysis

Roger Hicks considers... Bréauté-Beuzeville, Haute-Normandie, 1984, by Jean Gaumy



© JEAN GAUMY/MAGNUM PHOTOS

It is very easy to identify immediately with some scenes – been there, seen that. This is an undoubted example. The rain-streaked window, the slightly unfamiliar buildings, the bus stop – we've all seen something similar countless times.

That's the immediate reaction. But why does it work? Why isn't it just a snapshot? In a sense, it is: the probability that it was set up can safely be discounted. In another sense, it is a magnificent illustration of two sayings. One that is not normally related to photography is French: 'Life is like a Spanish inn. You only get from it what you bring to it.' The other comes from the Wild West: 'Shoot first, ask questions later.'

Everyone brings an immense amount to this picture: we've all been there, possibly shivering in a wet mackintosh, or even inside the warm café. As for shooting first, it's a perfect example of another old saying: 'If you don't play, you can't win.' I don't know if this was the only picture of the subject, or the best of a series shot over a couple of hours, but it doesn't matter – the picture is the thing.

The fact that I've already dragged up three sayings-cum-clichés is testament to its universality. But I'm still only part-way towards explaining why it works. Another important factor is focus. Nothing is all that sharp, because the depth of field needs to be immense: we need to see both the rain on the window and the house beyond. You can't do this just with a depth-of-field scale or even depth-of-field tables – you need to be thoroughly familiar with your camera and lens.

Next there is composition. That post, with its alienating numbers, chops the picture in two: a camera club no-no. But alienation is essential to the story, and the figures are on the right, or heading right: the bus or train promises warmth, security, shelter and a way out of the rain. The house is already protecting its occupants, four-square against the weather. There are numerous contrasts between permanent and temporary comfort, to say nothing of the instrumental or utilitarian choices we all make, all the time.

Then there is self-confidence. Many of us might be tempted to take a picture like this, but a few of us wouldn't, because we'd be afraid it wouldn't work, we might be put off by the reflections. But if they work in someone else's picture, they can also work in ours. This is the final lesson. Look at your own pictures as if someone else had taken them. Forget about how easy or difficult they were to shoot: just be honest about whether they work. AP

Roger Hicks has been writing about photography since 1981 and has published more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife Frances Schultz (visit his website at **www.rogerandfrances.com**). Every week in this column Roger deconstructs a classic or contemporary photograph. **Next week he considers an image by Larry Towell**

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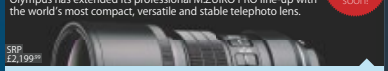
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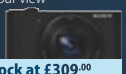
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Toorongo Falls, Noojee



Location: Toorongo Falls, Noojee, Victoria, Australia

Nikon D810 | Nikkor 14-24mm @ 14mm
ISO 100 | f/18 | 1.3 seconds

LEE Filters SW150 Mark II Filter Holder, 0.9 ND Soft Grad + Circular Polariser

We often face a real challenge when shooting waterfalls, managing the highlights, glare and shiny reflections within a scene requires some careful planning. On this particular occasion I used the LEE SW150 Mark II System with a 0.9 ND soft grad and circular polariser. The polariser dramatically reduced the amount of glare and reflections from the rocks and vegetation, whilst the 0.9 ND soft grad (positioned in the top third of the image) reduced the bright highlights from above, allowing me to use a long enough shutter speed to capture the desired amount of water movement.

When using the polariser for the first time I was blown away by the quality. It cut through the glare and reflections allowing the natural tones in the scene to penetrate through. Yet again my LEE filters provided me with the perfect recipe for capturing beauty effortlessly!



Sarah Hatton
www.iso100.com.au

SW150
Mark II filter system

LEE Filters

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